

DISCIPLINE AND SAVAGERY

The spectacle of the post-apartheid South African school

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ABSTRACT

In describing and evaluating a South African semiotic of order and disorder, this dissertation traces representations of school discipline through examples of colonial and apartheid to key contemporary discursive practices. In this interdisciplinary dissertation three contemporary sets of texts are analysed: the Department of Education policy document, *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* (2001), news articles on school disruption from the *Business Day*, *Mail&Guardian* and the *Sowetan* newspapers (1996-2002), and photographs on delinquency and discipline taken by a group of Cape Town public secondary school students. An evaluation of the hegemonic tendencies in the first two genres is illuminated in comparative analysis with school-based discursive practices. The analysis of all three texts relies on an examination of how teachers, students and the school space are represented. I am interested in the terms of the normative framework of discursive practice set up in the texts, and also in the ways in which that discursive framework is transgressed.

The thesis developed throughout this dissertation is that contemporary representations of school discipline and delinquency reiterate a dichotomy of savagery and civilisation that enabled the colonial and apartheid construction of race as meaningful in social organisation. In both the British 'adaptation' and apartheid education models school disciplinary technologies are employed not only in the civilising of black savagery, but in the construction of African tradition as archaic, and as signifying savagery. Schools, although posited as modernising institutions, are therefore also discursive spaces in which savagery is reiterated in the South African construction of the social category race. Despite its revisionist aims, the policy document *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* reinvokes the savagery/modernity binary when it presents apartheid practices as savage and suggests that teachers be born again as modern. In its representation of teachers as savage it echoes the narrative consistently presented in news accounts of school disruption. In the remarkably consistent narrative of the news reports teachers are represented as despotic and students as vigilante mobs. Although this narrative draws on the trope of reasoned and emancipatory mass protest against apartheid it is more closely related to the apartheid apologist representation of civil protest as evidence of savagery. The student photographs also represent the school space as the scene of the failure or success of modernisation. Students display their familiarity with the dominant discourse evidenced in the policy document and the news articles. However, students also use the school's disciplinary discourse as a space within which to articulate private narratives of identity and history. More explicit evasions of the dominant discursive framework are representations of the school space as one of creative exploration in which teachers and students are not interpellated as adversaries.

For all the many teachers who have encouraged me to transgress.

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to and quotation in this dissertation, from the work or works of other people has been acknowledged through citation and reference.

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1. THE MYTH OF DISCIPLINE

This dissertation is an interdisciplinary exploration of how school discipline is represented in post-apartheid South Africa, revealing how the discourses of race and authority, modernity and savagery are inscribed in various representations of school order and disorder. I am especially interested in how representations of school order and disorder come to stand for the possibility or failure of a transformation from authoritarian apartheid order to a culture of civil democracy. In the dissertation textual analysis, discourse analysis and a discussion of socio-historical discursive contexts are combined in the articulation of how order and disorder are imagined in post-apartheid South Africa.

My interest in this topic has its origins in a brief period of substitute teaching. The disciplinary discourse of the school where I taught was characterised by an insistence on petty rules of dress and highly formalised encounters between teachers¹ and students². I was struck by the disjunction between this discourse and the political and popular discourse of human rights and of democratic change that was common outside of the school, and in education policy. I was also struck by how the insistence on ‘strict’ discipline did not mean that students or teachers enjoyed a safe, engaging learning environment. In this teachers and students were interpellated as adversaries. There was a sense of battle between students and teachers, resulting sometimes in an atmosphere of menace. The inefficiency of the system notwithstanding, a lot of energy went into maintaining the status quo. Students put a lot of energy into petty disruption, and teachers in turn put a lot of energy into policing the semblances of order. Although this problem of discipline could be located in a number of factors, not least of which was a staff divided by loyalties to the previous and present principals, the situation begged the question Fairclough (2001) finds crucial to discourse analysis: how is the system’s failure necessary? My investigation of the significance of school discipline is underpinned by this question. I was also left with the

¹ Although in South African educational policy discourse teachers are referred to as ‘educators’ (South African Schools Act, 1996), it continues to be more common outside of educational circles to refer to teachers, and I will use this term throughout this dissertation.

² Similarly, students are sometimes referred to as ‘learners’ (South African Schools Act, 1996), a term that is part of a new educational discourse in which students are positioned as more active (unlike, for instance, ‘pupil’, as is common in news reports).

impression that the emphasis placed on this kind of school order was a reinvestment in the authoritarianism that characterised everyday apartheid.

The original impetus for this study was therefore the desire to illuminate how school discipline functions in post-apartheid South African schools. It was my hypothesis that what is thought of as a ‘disciplined’ school is in fact a model of interaction with authority that is residual of apartheid conceptions of authority. In the course of my studies I have come to see schools as privileged sites in discursive practice, as ‘other’ spaces where fantasies of the frontier are played out in state, media and even, to some extent, in local school discursive practices.

In this chapter I will first articulate the significance of my study, locating it in terms of other studies of school discipline as well as in terms of the relationship between discipline and social order. This leads me to a discussion of discipline and delinquency as features of post-enlightenment discourse, with reference to what are key terms for this study, namely savagery, tradition and modernity. Next I explain the selection of texts I analyse, as well as briefly articulate the commonalities and differences in my analytical approach to each set of texts. My study examines the intersection between what Soja (1996) terms ‘historicality’, ‘spatiality’ and ‘sociality’, and in this and in the consequent wide range of texts analysed, and the range of analytical approaches taken in my study, it is not only interdisciplinary but also ‘transdisciplinary’. In the conclusion of this chapter I discuss this term and its implications for my work before outlining the structure of the rest of the dissertation.

Articulating education policy, media and local school discourses

School discipline is an important issue both in school communities and in media discourse. The South African shift to a democratic state in 1994 is associated with a (somewhat later) shift in school policy from an authoritarian pedagogy to a more participative and student-centred one (namely, outcomes-based education). The shift is both performative of a more democratic culture and productive of that culture. It is very important to enabling a popular democratic culture that schools institute an everyday practice of democracy – that schools foster belief in, as Rebehn (1994) puts it, the ‘religion of democracy’. The dramatic shift means that schools are the proposed sites of major institutional changes that fundamentally alter how school discipline

functions. How discipline is understood – what is considered to be misconduct and what is considered to be an appropriate way to deal with misconduct – impacts in terms of practice on young South Africans’ lives in dramatic and significant ways. School discipline is a highly significant practice, and has considerable material effect. How discipline is understood impacts in that it is part of how young South Africans form their identity, as well as part of their everyday experience of the practice of authority. Given the school’s importance in producing social order, the everyday practice of school discipline is also highly significant in the production of social order outside of the school grounds, and outside a student’s sojourn there. Although a large number of South Africans leave formal schooling at a young age, for instance, to contribute to family finances, 57% of working age South Africans have completed at least Grade 8 (SAIRR, 2001, p.240). Consequently, school-based disciplinary practices impact on a majority of South Africans, as does the order implicit in those practices.

Few studies of schools focus on how order is maintained (although there are a number of manuals explaining how to manage a classroom³). None of these studies investigate South African schools, or discursive practices. Given how important school disciplinary techniques are to the everyday experiences of teachers and students, it is understandable that very few studies of schools do not include *some* mention of how order is maintained. Similarly, most studies convey an impression of what is considered orderly in the schools studied. However, very few studies focus specifically on school discipline, and even fewer problematise how order is conceived of (Devine, 1996; Willis, 1977; Denscombe, 1992; Slee, 1988, 1995; Furlong, 1985). Denscombe (1992) discusses how British teachers define school order, how they institute it and its importance to their professional status. However, he does not relate how teachers define order, and its importance, to a broader social context. Devine (1996) critiques the relegation in inner-city New York of matters of order to security personnel, and relates this to a ‘culture of violence’. In this there is implicit the understanding that school order is related to a broader social discourse of order. However, in this finding Devine naturalises students’ delinquencies, and, although he critiques how they are dealt with, he does not critique how students come to be

³ See for instance Strahan (1997).

understood as doing wrong. Slee (1988, 1995) presents an analysis of Australian education policy as it pertains to school discipline. He points out the links between Australian policy and British policy, thereby locating the formulation of policy in a broader national discursive relationship with Britain. He also points out that while the form of punishment might change, the discourse of discipline does not change. In other words, although teachers come to rely not on corporal punishment but on exclusion, it is still the same kinds of students who are punished and marginalised⁴. However, although Slee's study explores some aspects of the implications of discipline being a discursive practice, he does not explore how school discipline as discursive practice, or how the definition of delinquency, fits into other social discursive practices. Furlong (1985) presents a survey of how school delinquency has been explained, noting that delinquency is sometimes understood in positivist terms as being the failure of student or of the school. However, some theories problematise how delinquency is defined (e.g. 'labelling' theories), while others describe discipline and delinquency as negotiated between teachers and students. Theories of cultural reproduction understand student delinquency in the broader context of the cultural production of race, class and gender. Willis' (1977) study is a seminal work of this nature, where he examines how relations of discipline and delinquency in a British school result in the reproduction of class relations for his male working class respondents. Although Willis's study is manifestly a discussion of school discourse, his focus is on how this discourse is manifest in the actions of the students rather than in how they represent discipline. Furlong, however, proposes that delinquency should be understood as a system of signification in which single delinquent acts are polysemous. I will return in more detail to this point in chapter five. Willis' close methodological focus on school-based discourse and his conceptual focus on the relationship between the school and society precludes an exploration of how students make private meaning in their acts of discipline or delinquency. While Furlong's conceptual focus would sustain such an approach, both his conceptual focus and his methodological focus on academic discourse precludes an exploration of how what is defined as delinquent sustains or undermines social order in a specific historical

⁴ While it is true that exclusion is less brutal than beating, Slee (1985) and other educational theorists point out that exclusion is as unsuccessful in reducing disruption as corporal punishment was. Arguably it has an equally deleterious effect on the learner, frequently leaving him or her stranded outside the

moment. I will argue that South African school discipline is both defined and practiced in dialogue with popular and state discursive practice, to the extent that school discipline can be considered expressive not only of local discursive practices but also of macro-discursive practices.

School discipline is not only significant as practice. It is also important in its semiotic links with a broader South African concern with order and delinquency in general. A current South African concern with crime, which may, in Cohen's (1972) and Hall et al's (1978) terms be described as a moral panic, means that issues of delinquency have considerable value. I will argue here that their value is to some extent drawn from their significance regarding racial order. School discipline and delinquency are regarded in this dissertation both as significant in their own right of important school practices and as expressive of a South African cultural milieu. Contemporary representations of school discipline and delinquency are considered here as cultural phenomena and as descriptive of a post-apartheid South African 'discourse moment' (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). This means that South African discursive practice is a monument to, or an archive of (Foucault, 1991, p.60), the time of its production. Policy, media and local discourses reveal what it is possible to say: "the limits and forms of the *sayable*" (Foucault, 1991, p.59)⁵. Examining contemporary South African discursive practice offers a way of writing a 'history of the present' (Fairclough, 1995). Discipline is a particularly fruitful area of study in this regard because social regulation, or social control, is an important arena for the reproduction of a dominant social order (Hall, 1978; Willis, 1977; Green, 1998). There are a number of influential studies of the relationship between discourse and order that focus on the definition of delinquency (e.g. Cohen, 1972, 1985; Foucault, 1977; Hall et al, 1978). Hall et al (1978) describe how the media and policing 'invention' of mugging in Britain in the 1970s reproduced a racist, classed social order (see also Cohen (1972) for a discussion of youth and moral panic, Lucas (1998) for a discussion of the association of youth and moral panic in the production of race, and, as discussed above, Willis, 1977). In a number of studies a school's discursive

mainstream school system. Exclusion, like corporal punishment, does nothing to bolster a student's faith in the schooling system, or his or her trust of authority figures.

⁵ Like Barthes, Foucault is concerned with what is considered natural. However, where for Barthes the question is 'how is meaning signified?', a semiological question, for Foucault the question is 'what is it possible to ask?'.

practices are seen as significant of broader social discursive practices (Green, 1998; Devine, 1996). The literature on school discipline as productive of social order most frequently focuses on class (e.g. Willis, 1977; Wexler, 1992; Polk, 1988) or on gender (e.g. Carter, 2002; Wolpe, 1988; Blackman, 1998; Alder, 1988) rather than on race (e.g. Troyna & Hatcher, 1992). There are very few studies that are set in South Africa that refer in any detail to discipline, delinquency or school disruption. Ntshoe (1999) associates violent disruptions in schools with violence perpetrated by apartheid state authorities. Chisholm (1989) associates the definition and management of delinquency in reformatories and industrial schools with the larger projects of the apartheid state, and, similarly, Badroodien (2001) investigates how 'colouredness' is reproduced in the disciplinary practices of the Ottery School of Industries in Cape Town. For all these authors there are strong links between disciplinary practices in schools and the production of race as a meaningful social indicator. In addition, Vally (1999) describes raced disciplinary practices as some of the ways in which schools continue to distinguish between students on a racial basis.

If by discipline is understood more than simply the punishments students receive for wrongdoing, or even the definition of wrongdoing – if discipline is understood in the Foucaultian sense as a system of control through organisation – then the link between race and discipline is even stronger. Schools were instrumental in producing race as a meaningful social category in apartheid South Africa. Ntshoe (1999) points out that “[t]he education system, perhaps more than any other sector, reproduced the categories of the “African”, “coloured”, “Indian”, and “white”, and served as a primary means of constructing and reproducing racial and ethnic identities” (p.2)⁶. Watson (1970) describes how individual school admission officials decided who could be admitted to whites-only schools according to a student’s appearance, the appearance of his or her parents, their lifestyle and their jobs. In South Africa, school curricula and administration were instrumental in producing racial identity. Language policies continue, in some schools, to enact racial division as far as admission is concerned – so that black students can be legitimately excluded from schools on the grounds that they do not speak the school’s primary language (Vally, 1999).

⁶ It should be noted that gender identities are also articulated in South African discursive practice with the construction and the reproduction of racial identities (e.g. Walker, 1982; Chisholm, 1989).

Disciplinary practices within some schools differentiate between students on the grounds of apartheid-defined racial categories, and so maintain and produce those racial categories (Vally, 1999). (I will return to discipline and the reproduction of social order in schools in chapter two).

With the exception of Vally's study the above studies describe apartheid conditions. Vally's study (like Ntshoe's) is focused exclusively on school-based data. This means that their analyses do not take into account the relationship between school-based discursive practices and broader social discursive practices. While in their description of late colonial and apartheid conditions Chisholm and Badroodien take into account the relationship between policy discourse and institutional practices, they do not include discussion of popular discursive practices that form part of the context of policy discourse. The wide range of texts analysed in this dissertation means that I am able to track the formation of the tropes of school discipline and delinquency across genres. In that I locate contemporary South African discursive practices in terms of their socio-historical contexts I am also able to track tropes of school discipline historically.

Methodology

The texts I have selected are the policy document *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* (Department of Education, 2000), news articles drawn from the *Business Day*, *Mail&Guardian* and the *Sowetan* newspapers (1996-2002), and photographs taken by a group of Cape Town secondary school students. All the texts have as their subject the problematic of school disruption. I pose two questions of the texts analysed in this dissertation:

1. In what ways are discipline and delinquency represented, and
2. To what extent is the text (or collection of texts) generative of discursive practice that transgresses (by which I mean 'evades' or 'transforms'⁷) the frontier of modernity and savagery?

However, like the intersection with class identities, this intersection falls outside the scope of this dissertation.

⁷ I primarily use the term 'transgress' in de Certeau's (1984) sense of transforming a border between two states – in this case between being modern and being savage – into a bridge. However, I am also informed by hooks' (1994) use of the term to refer to educational practices that challenge hegemonic discursive practices.

I also examine apartheid and colonial⁸ discursive practices as regards school discipline in order to establish a socio-historical context for my analysis of the above texts.

Bearing in mind Soja's (1996) criticisms of the binary opposition of micro and macro discourse, I do not wish to signal too much of an investment in this binary. However, it should be noted that while the policy document and news media articles offer examples of more macro-level discourse in high modality formats, the student photographs present a more local point of view in an explicitly creative format. The student photographs are an opportunity for those usually considered to be the subjects of school discipline to express their understanding of how delinquency signifies in their school. I do not address school practice directly in this dissertation, being more concerned with the discursive framework that informs school practice. However, my continued interest in the practice of school discipline is reflected in my interest in discourse as productive of practice and as practice itself. My interest in school practice is also reflected in the case study that is at the heart of this project. Although the photographic study took place in a different school to the one I mention earlier, the student photographs that I discuss in chapter five nevertheless represent my return to the site of the school to understand a point of view that previously I had such limited access to.

Given that each set of texts analysed in this dissertation has required a somewhat different method of selection and analysis, I have chosen to discuss the methodology of each selection and analytical procedure in more detail at the beginning of the relevant chapters. However, a broad orientation is established here regarding the significance of the different texts chosen.

Socio-historical discursive context

As I have indicated earlier in this chapter, it is my hypothesis that there are discursive links between how school discipline is conceptualised in post-apartheid South Africa and how it was conceptualised during apartheid. In order to establish whether there is

⁸ Mamdani (1996) argues that apartheid was the generic form of the colonial state in Africa. I will, however, distinguish between apartheid and colonial states, if only in that apartheid discursive practices drew on but also developed colonial discursive practices as regards race, discipline and education.

a link I discuss the ways in which colonial and apartheid discursive practices articulated discipline, education and race. In my discussion I look at education policies as well as media representations of especially student resistance to apartheid. I track the establishment of the trope of the savage traditional African authority and the trope of the savage vigilante mob through colonial and apartheid discursive practices to contemporary examples, looking at, for example, Loram's (1917) British colonial education model, Bantu Education policy (1951) as well as media representations of mass protests against apartheid.

Education policy

Alternatives to Corporal Punishment is an extremely pertinent example of state discursive practice as regards discipline in schools. In contrast to the documents examined above, the education policy document *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* is extremely current. The 1996 abolishment of corporal punishment in schools was recently challenged in the Constitutional Court. The policy document was released shortly after the Constitutional Court found in favour of the Department of Education. The document is a convenient marker of a shift in South African popular and state discourse. It is not in itself the moment of transition: it is only another policy document that might not even reach a significant proportion of teachers. However, it articulates a number of key themes in South African popular and state discourse, themes that are repeated throughout the policy document, and in media reports. The first theme is the association of the abolition of corporal punishment with modernisation. Here modernisation (and the abolition of corporal punishment) is associated with the transition to a just and representative state. The state distances itself from the savagery of apartheid in distancing itself from corporal punishment. In *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, then, punishment features as a sign for the illegitimate authority of apartheid, as the irruption of savagery. Abolishing corporal punishment, here, brings South Africa in step with the rest of the world.

Communities around the world began to see the scrapping of corporal punishment in schools as an important step towards creating more peaceful and tolerant societies. Now, in Europe, North America, Australia, Japan and many other countries, corporal punishment has been banned (Department of Education, 2001, p.5).

This statement of geographic position is really a statement of a temporal position. Through abolishing corporal punishment, South Africans will join the modern age.

Where the news reports present a contemporary South African idea of savagery, *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, in its relocation of savagery to the past, presents an idea of modernity. However, in its continued reliance on the binary opposition of modernity and savagery, its revisionist tendencies are undermined.

News reports

Media texts are extremely powerful producers of discursive practice. In South Africa the news media has played a significant role both in legitimising and in destabilising the apartheid regime (Phelan, 1987; Nixon, 1993; HRC, 1999; Sanders, 2000). Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) describe the importance of mass media texts in terms of the increased importance of communication and information industries in late modernity. They discuss Thompson's (1995) proposal that one of the salient characteristics of late modernity is 'mediated quasi-interaction' with mass media (such as books, newspapers, radio and television) – and that mediated quasi-interaction is a privileged site for identity formation. However, media consumers have no control over the production of media texts that are both cultural resources (and so enriching) as well as sites of struggle or hegemonic domination. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) state that the shift in the importance of the media indicates a shift in how society is regulated. They argue that "the unprecedented autonomy of individuals [in late modernity] goes with an unprecedented dependence on mass mediated symbolic resources" (p.44) over which consumers have no control. However, the cultural significance of mass media should not simply be equated with ideological indoctrination:

Media discourse should be regarded as the site of complex and often contradictory processes, including ideological processes. Ideology should not be seen as a constant and predictable presence in all media discourses, by definition. (Fairclough, 1995, 47)

Media texts both reflect and produce society and culture. They are 'barometers of social change' (Fairclough, 1995, 61), reflecting social change, but, as powerful and significant modes of late modern social practice, they also produce meaning.

Reports of school disruptions and Department of Education interventions published in the *Business Day*, *Mail&Guardian*, and *Sowetan* newspapers during the period 1996-2002, give a significant indication of the discursive moment I describe here. The *Business Day*, *Mail&Guardian* and the *Sowetan* represent a broad range of South

African readers. The *Business Day* draws a readership from top earners (40% earn more than R12 000 per month⁹) and expresses a corporate point of view. The *Mail&Guardian* caters for highly educated readers who are as likely to be white as black. The paper was vocal in its criticism of the apartheid state. The *Sowetan* caters predominantly for black readers who have some high school education and are middle income earners (AMPS 2000). Despite the broad range of readers, all the newspapers display a marked tendency to describe school disruption in terms of a binary opposition of modernity and savagery. The reports in the sample display a fairly consistent concern with the possibility either of black or white savagery, and so display an anxiety about failing to be modern. Although there are few explicit references to race, I will argue that there is a strong racial subtext, which relies on the modernity/savagery dichotomy, in the reports. Mass media texts are extremely important in contemporary discursive practice, and news reports are especially important in the South African context. The reports are also important because their strong racial subtext provides a link between the explicit tropes of savagery in apartheid and colonial discursive practices and the highly muted references to savagery through modernity in revisionist texts such as *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*.

Student photographs

Having looked at education policy it is important to look at everyday practices in school. The 'ideal' order (Ball, 1990) represented in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* may have little to do with what actually happens in schools. Despite the fact that social order is enacted in schools by the state, through the formulation of policy and the regulation of its practice, disciplinary practices are not the same in all South African schools (Vally, 1999). What is considered misconduct for both educators and students, and what is considered an appropriate way of dealing with misconduct differs from community to community, from school to school, and from classroom to classroom. As much as the process of writing policy is 'unwieldy and complex' (Ball, 1990), the translation of state policy into everyday school practice is not reliable. The South African Department of Education found that only one in five policy documents reach their target (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). Although 86% of

⁹ 'Business Day readers young and well-heeled' *Business Day* 24 August 2001.

documents reach provincial offices, only 65% reach district offices. Less than half of the documents travel successfully from the district office to the school itself, and of these only 19% reach the staff and the governing body. There is a strong likelihood that many of the documents that *do* reach educators are not read, since many educators admit that they do not like to read (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999).

Policy implementation success is also affected by the degree to which educators understand how the changes affect their everyday classroom practice. A number of studies have indicated that although some educators believe that they practice learner-centred teaching (as required by the new curriculum), there is little change in classrooms (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999, 157). Educators' poor conceptual knowledge in their field may also contribute to the extent to which they can implement policy (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999). Educators have asked for more direct training in their subject fields and in the new pedagogy (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999, 31).

[W]hatever the role of authoritarian systems of teacher education and management may have been in initiating the vicious cycle of rote learning and creating a climate for its perpetuation, the fundamental mechanism for its propagation is the lack of conceptual knowledge, reading skills and spirit of inquiry in amongst educators. (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999)

Individual parents, educators and students also resist policy change. For example, racism continues to be a problem in schools, and many schools openly defy the abolition of corporal punishment (Vally, 1999). Values inherited from the apartheid era are still entrenched in some schools, especially in management cultures and in the prevalence of racism, sexism and authoritarianism (Department of Education, 2001; Vally, 1999, Ntshoe, 1999). Even where parents, educators and students accept policy reform, its translation into practice is not uniform in all schools. Cuban (1998) discusses the inevitability of schools altering the reforms they are subject to – claiming a certain agency in the process. Similarly, where national education departments import or 'borrow' (Steiner-Khamsi & Quist, 2000) an educational model the values and paradigms operating locally shift the nature of model (Bude, 1983). Further, Fuller suggests that in the South African context "the bureaucratization of reform can disempower... inspiring educators" and that it will not "energise new families and local citizens to become involved with their neighbourhood schools" (1999, p.263). This implies that a disregard for local discursive practices will undermine reform.

My concern in this dissertation is with how discipline is imagined. Consequently my investigation of local discursive practice is an investigation of how discipline is represented rather than how it is enacted. I have chosen to examine student representations, rather than teacher representations, because students are the primary subjects of school discipline. I asked a group of 40 Grade 11 students at a Cape Town public secondary school to take part in making creative photographic representations of discipline and delinquency at their school. In this exercise, students do not only produce local disciplinary discursive practice, but they perform their personal identity (Schaafsma, 1998; Wexler, 1992). In using a discourse of regulation as a mode of personal expression, they evade its regulation to some extent.

Local – or micro-level – ‘consumption’ of discipline gives it meaning (Mackay, 1997; de Certeau, 1984). For Mackay (1997) the local consumption of commodities is more than simply an affirmation of class, or other, social categories, but rather a creative act of identity-formation. If discipline is considered a commodity, the ways in which it is ‘used’ can be understood, as with everyday objects, as significant ways of producing its meaning. Hall (1997) proposes that cultural studies be conceived of as studies of a ‘cultural circuit’ where cultural representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation are understood to be linked in the process of making meaning culturally. Similarly, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) suggest that combining critical discourse analysis with ethnographic research means that discourse can be ‘located as part of a wider set of practices in the familial local context’ (p.45). What I propose is that how discipline is represented by school students, can be considered as locating a broader discursive practice in a local context. Despite the power and influence of policy and media discourses, they cannot be said to exercise uniform or even unilateral control over local expression. The ways in which discipline is ‘used’ by students can be significant ways of resisting, reproducing or changing social order.

Analysis

In my discussion of the socio-historical discursive context of contemporary discursive practices, I rely heavily on the insights of Mamdani (1996) in his discussion of apartheid authority as a generic form of colonial authority, and also on Chisholm’s (1989) articulation of modernising discursive practice and raced delinquency. This

analysis provides certain key discursive tropes that I refer back to in my analyses of the policy document, the news articles and the student photographs.

Although the policy document, news articles and student photographs represent very different genres, my methods of analysis for each set of texts are quite similar. These are a combination of a grounded theory approach (Tischer et al, 2000) and semiotic analysis (Hodge & Kress, 1988). In that I am interested in connotative and denotative meanings, and in the narratives presented in the texts analysed there is an intersection in my work with what Tischer et al (2000) refer to as ‘narrative semiotics’. However, I do not employ the ‘actant’ model Tischer et al describe. In my interest in genre as regulating of texts I am drawing on Fairclough (1995, 2001; also Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). I am informed in my analysis, as well as in the way I discuss my analysis, by a cultural studies approach (Mirzoeff, 1999; du Gay, 1997; Hall, 1997). Emmison and Smith (2000) describe this approach as drawing on semiotic analysis (especially in examining binary divisions, narratives, the framing of the scene and genre) where the signification process of the text is analysed. There are intersections here with media analysis (Fiske & Hartley, 1978). In all three sets of texts I examine how students, teachers and the school itself is represented. In the case of the policy document this means tracking the different ways in which students and teachers are interpellated. In this I draw on the discourse analysis techniques used by Goodman (2000) in her analysis of the discourses of female colonial authority in India, and by the techniques demonstrated by Fairclough (2001) of a British New Labour Green Paper on Welfare Reform. In particular I examine the ways in which the policy document crosses genre boundaries, and what the impact of its cross-genre nature is on the interpellation of teachers in particular¹⁰. In the analysis of the news articles and the photographs, I follow the same basic principles: i.e. I track the patterns of representations of teachers, students and the school. However, each of these samples are relatively large (numbering well over 200 texts for each set). Therefore, I began by sorting the texts into categories using a grounded theory approach (Tischer et al,

¹⁰ Here I rely on Chouliaraki and Fairclough’s (1999) definition of genre (see also Fairclough, 1995, 2001). Here genre is understood as a way of regulating and ordering discourse – as “a specifically discursive structuring or ordering of a social practice; a regulative device through which relations of power are realised as forms of control” (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p.144). If genre is understood as a form of regulation and control, shifts in genre, and combinations of genres, are instances of resistance, in terms of discursive practice to systems.

2000), and so allowing my categories to be determined by a combination of my contextual knowledge and on the basis of the data. I discuss the respective categories (as well as the selection and data-generation procedures) in more detail at the beginning of chapters four and five. Having established the broad trends, I selected a number of texts for closer analysis and discussion. These texts are either exemplary of a dominant representation in that sample, or disrupt the dominant representation either directly or in their complexity. These texts are discussed in terms of a semiotic analysis. In my analysis of the news articles I draw on the techniques used by media analysts Fair and Astroff (1991) in their analysis of the term 'black-on-black' violence in the US media, and also by Macmillan (2002) who analyses the representation of school disruption in the British tabloid press. When analysing the student photographs I am influenced by Hall's (1997) cultural studies approach to the 'spectacle of the other', and Alexander's (1994) structural analysis of how children feature in magazine advertisements.

Mythologising discipline

School discipline is produced in the intersection of state, popular and local discursive practices. Where these practices are illuminated by Foucault's (1977) theory of discipline and control, they are also rooted in ideas of savagery and civilisation that are specific to the African and to the South African context.

Delinquency and discipline

As discussed earlier, delinquency has been defined academically in a number of ways (Furlong, 1985) – e.g. as located in the psychological or social failure of the student, or of the school, or as an expression of social order. Given that delinquency is most usually defined with respect to specific social relations and environments (see e.g. Denscombe, 1992; Alder, 1988), clearly the relationship between social order and the definition of delinquency and discipline is of great interest.

Perhaps the most seminal account of the relationship between discipline and social order is Foucault's (1977) *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. For Foucault, the most important difference between medieval torture and the Western Enlightenment's penal discipline is the aim of the penal system to reform criminals. The penal system is more successful in defining delinquency than it is in reducing

crime. In the modern understanding of criminality, the criminal does not spring into existence at the moment of the crime. For the purposes of modern discipline, the person who has committed the crime is understood to have always tended towards committing that crime.

The introduction of the 'biographical' is important in the history of penalty as it establishes the 'criminal' as existing before the crime and even outside it. As the biography of the criminal duplicates in penal practice the analysis of circumstances used in gauging the crime, so one sees penal discourse and the psychiatric discourse crossing each other's frontiers; and there, at their point of junction, is formed the notion of the 'dangerous' individual, which makes it possible to draw up a network of causality in terms of an entire biography and to present a verdict of punishment-correction. (Foucault, 1977, 252)

Foucault suggests that the modern is signalled by the forms of control associated with the penal system: the disciplinary 'technologies' of surveillance. These are also the 'technologies' of control in schools: processes that 'individuate' students (like examinations, registers, lining up) and make them visible to authorities. Foremost in the modern penal system's control through surveillance is the building's design. In Bentham's influential 'panopticon' model, the prisoner is always visible, and although not always observed can never be sure when he or she is being observed. School architecture often tends towards the panopticon model first suggested by Bentham (1843)¹¹. Indeed in the goal of reform, the fantasy of the modern penal system conflated learning and discipline. This is illustrated in the following picture in which prisoners are imagined in a lecture theatre that is also a prison.

In the discourse of development (Escobar, 1985) the school is a mode of reforming 'underdevelopment'. The school becomes a sign for the possibility of modernity (Fuller, 1991). In that the school becomes a sign for modernity it functions like the prison. The spectacle of torture is displaced onto the prison, which becomes a spectacle not only of the state's power but of the state's good will in its intention to reform (Foucault, 1977). Although spectacular punishment is replaced by panopticon reform, by 'discipline', the element of the spectacular is retained in the figure of the prison itself. The sign of the prison is, according to Foucault's account, both

¹¹ In some respects the school that is the setting for the photographs analysed in chapter five conforms to this model in the sense that it has a hollow centre surrounded by open corridors in which students who are not in classrooms under their teacher's gaze are extremely visible.



Figure 1. 'Lecture on the evils of alcoholism in the Fresnes prison' undated (Foucault, 1977, 166).

significant of control and the potential lack of control.

[Prison] helps to establish an open illegality, irreducible at a certain level and secretly useful, at once refractory and docile; it isolates, outlines, brings out a form of illegality that seems to sum up symbolically all the others, but which makes it possible to leave in the shade those that one wishes to - or must - tolerate. (1977, 277)

The prison, both the punishment and the potential for punishment, marks the possibility of resistance and immediately also marks the futility of resistance. I will argue that the school functions similarly in South African discursive practice: the school is the site of development and of the institution of modernity, but is also the location of underdevelopment, and so is a place where savagery is contained.

I argue in this dissertation that 'discipline' may be considered in Barthes' terms as a myth: a word (or picture, practice or object) that has been emptied of its literal meaning and has come to be synonymous with a more abstract concept. This is not a simple equation but a nuanced development of meaning that integrates the sign with a concept "as if the [sign] *naturally* conjured up the concept, as if the signifier *gave a foundation* to the signified" (Barthes, 1993, 117). The example that Barthes uses is of a photograph of a black soldier saluting the French flag. The picture comes not to

represent this particular soldier saluting a flag, but is the ‘presence of French imperialism’ (p.115). The conflation of soldier and imperialism comes to seem natural. In becoming a myth a sign loses meaning. Some aspect of its original meaning is subsumed into the secondary meaning it accrues. For Barthes the loss of meaning is political. The point of view expressed in the sign is obscured in making the relationship between the signifier and the signified seem natural. In the sign seeming natural, the politics of its construction are obscured.

In the case of the Negro soldier... what is got rid of is certainly not French imperialism; it is the contingent, historical, in one word: *fabricated*, quality of colonialism (p.131).

When discipline is used in South Africa to represent order, the racial politics of the order invoked are obscured to the extent that revisionist texts are undermined. I argue in the following chapter that the politics of South African discipline is one that relies on racial distinction.

Rather than drawing examples from the complex texts analysed in this dissertation, I will illustrate the above points with scenes from the popular television programme, *Yizo Yizo*¹² 1 (Markgraaf, 2001). The television programme is a fictional account of events at ‘Supetsela High School’, a township¹³ public school. Although fictional the show was extensively researched, and part of its appeal is its realistic (if dramatic) representation of township school life (Steinberg, 2001). It has been highly successful, winning international awards as well as garnering on average 75% of the black viewing audience in South Africa (Steinberg, 2001). It is a joint venture of the South African Broadcasting Corporation’s education division and the national Department of Education. It has been highly controversial in its graphic representations of gangster violence and student delinquency¹⁴. The phenomenon that is *Yizo Yizo* serves as a powerful example of how discipline is significant in contemporary South African discursive practice. The scenes are examples of the representation of the school as an intermediary space where the past irrupts into the present and where the future is formed. In a sequence of scenes from episode seven, discipline and order are

¹² ‘*This is it*’ (slang).

¹³ Under apartheid rule, black South Africans in urban areas were restricted to living in ‘townships’ usually located at some distance from urban centre. Although this law no longer exists, for a variety of social and economic reasons, township residents are with very few exceptions black.

¹⁴ This controversy reached its peak in the show being debated in parliament after a depiction in the second series of one of the gangster characters being raped in prison (see also Gear, 2001, Ndebele, 1999).

conflated. The representation of order is rendered inchoate in this process. In effect, order becomes a textual rumour – inescapable but hard to pin down.

“We are nothing without discipline,” says Thulas as he holds a gun to the principal’s head (*Yizo Yizo 1*, Markgraaf, 2001, episode 7). Thulas is an older student. Part of the ‘lost generation’ of black South African youth who gave up their education to wage a war against the apartheid state, at 23 years old Thulas is only in the eighth grade. He suffers post-traumatic stress syndrome from his involvement in a ‘self defence unit’ – small groups of black youth who policed the townships. Although he is not popular with the other students, he has appointed himself a protector of order. As well as illustrating how discipline is mythologised, the incident described here illustrates the complexity of an allegiance to order in a country where order was once defined as state-sanctioned brutality. Thulas’ act of holding the principal hostage starts with the gangster pupil, Papa Action, getting bored in class. His teacher, lazy and uninspired, drones on in the front of the class, reading the textbook out loud. Papa Action has had enough and he amuses himself by taking control of the classroom, and terrorising the other students. He leaps on the desks and forces the other students to stand and sing with him.



Figure 2. Papa Action. Yizo Yizo (Markgraaf, 2001).

One, a young woman, does not sing. Her inaction catches his attention and, with the air of a predator spotting his prey, he goes over to her. He starts to drag her out of the

classroom. When the teacher attempts to intervene, Papa Action snaps a condom at her. “Don’t worry,” he says, ‘I’m safe’.

Although the girl is wailing, a terrifying keening sound beyond words, no one intervenes as Papa Action forces her down the corridor, until he passes Thulas. Thulas tackles Papa Action. The noise of the fight brings another protector of order running. This time, at last, it is a teacher. Mr. Khumalo is a fair and strict adjudicator of right and wrong. He is not scared of Papa Action and takes him away to punish him. Papa Action submits to Mr. Khumalo, laying his knife down on the table before bending over. In the empty science lab, the gangster receives a caning from the teacher.

However, Mr. Khumalo will not escape unscathed. Papa Action’s gangster boss sends two henchmen over who shoot Mr. Khumalo for his indiscretion, and Thulas watches as the henchmen get the corrupt principal’s tacit permission to do so. Thulas snaps. He confronts the principal, Ken Mokoena, in his office. When the principal pulls a gun on him, Thulas disarms him with practiced ease and holds Mokoena hostage. We glimpse a badly broken vision of order as Thulas explains his actions by invoking the importance of discipline.

Without discipline you’re dead. I used to have soldiers. As a commander of my own unit I had to keep control... I remember one time, there was this boy in our township. He was a spy. We caught him and put him on his knees. [Mimes shooting gun into his own head.] I shot him. The others told me that without discipline you’re dead.

In these scenes discipline fails. It is the inadequate, dated (and illegal) response of a dysfunctional, scarred young man, and of a well-intentioned teacher – and graphic scenes of brutal corporal punishment earlier in the series make this point even more strongly. These scenes speak to the colonial order of vicious beatings, and to the dehumanising bureaucracy of apartheid: they address nightmares of the past that also represent our fears for the future. Later scenes will speak to dreams for the future. Viewers will be offered an alternative vision of order. The angelic Grace Letsedi takes over the job of principal after Ken Mokoena’s unceremonious withdrawal. She favours discussion over the harsh implementation of rules, but she does not shy away from standing by her rules. ‘You know when I feel [disheartened] I remind myself that as a teacher I can make a difference in a young person’s life. I can change

someone's life' she says, and we cannot help but be inspired. "What do you think we need to change?' she asks (episode 10).

Yizo Yizo presents an imagined account not only of how things are, but also of how things could be. Its status as educational entertainment, sponsored by the Department of Education means that it is designed to present a model of alternative ways of practicing order. It produces as well as reflects order. In this context it is particularly interesting to examine what kind of alternative order is presented in the show. Despite Grace Letsedi being so inspiring, the scenes of alternative order are not as rounded as those of chaos and brutal order are. My research demonstrates that *Yizo Yizo* is not unusual in this regard. It seems that the future is not imagined with as much rigour as the past. It is this observation that underpins my decision to investigate the degree of change in South African social order in terms of discourse. The engaging, and groundbreaking, nature of the representations of school life in *Yizo Yizo I* notwithstanding, in general the possibilities for order presented are simplistic. The choice is between a vicious corporal order that recalls colonial times, a dehumanising apartheid style bureaucracy, a brutal, vigilante order resonant with the struggle against apartheid, or a vague but sanitary 'politically correct' post-apartheid order.

In these scenes from *Yizo Yizo I* discipline is more than its literal definition of obedient students under the control of their educators. There is a sense here of longing and failure, of history, that is difficult to speak of, and is perhaps best represented in scenes like this where we understand *through* the gaps in what is shown, through the unspoken. So, discipline becomes the dream of the broken soldier. So, discipline is what separates us from the terrible chaos of the gangsters. It is *not* what is shown in these scenes. I suggest that the longing for discipline that is expressed in Thulas' speech, in *Yizo Yizo I* as a whole, as well as in numerous news articles, policy documents and in school communities themselves is the trace of a longing for enlightenment that in itself compromises transformation.

Savagery, tradition and modernity

The following set of scenes from episode three of *Yizo Yizo I* illustrates how the discursive formulation of an alternative to apartheid and colonial brutality and authoritarianism is undermined by reference to the binary of modernity and savagery.

In this set of scenes, the school comes to signify a frontier where the order of modern civilisation is disrupted by archaic savagery when an end of term party goes badly wrong. It culminates in the stoned black secondary school students dancing at night around a fire fed by desks and classroom doors. The students are eminently 'modern': the trance that leads to this destruction is caused by smoking crack, the students wear jeans, T-shirts and baseball caps, the rhythmic pounding music is *kwaito*¹⁵ blaring from a sound system. However, in their destruction of the emblems of modern schooling the lack of order the students display signifies a savagery that recalls the myth of 'Darkest Africa'.



Figure 3 . Desks burning. *Yizo Yizo* (Markgraaf, 2001).

In the above spectacle of 'otherness' the representation of the students in the television programme draws on the oldest, most racist European ways of seeing Africans, that is illustrated, for example, in the following depiction of 'Congo cannibals'.

In the intertextuality between images such as the one below and the *Yizo Yizo* dancing scene, its meaning is clear: In their abandonment of civilisation the students have been claimed by the night and so they are savage. The *Yizo Yizo* scenes conflate disorderly behaviour with 'African savagery', and conflate order with a modernisation that is by implication European. This representation suggests that other evidence of student

¹⁵ Kwaito is the popular South African answer to hiphop.

disorder – such as when the whole student body marches into the community to bring the gangsters to justice – must also be understood in terms of a dichotomy of savage and civilised behaviour. Although the students take their captive gangster to the police station, their mass action is represented as vigilante justice¹⁶ - and so, although this representation is associated more with apartheid than with colonial discursive practices, this scenario too is haunted by the figure of the savage.



Figure 4. 'Five years with the Congo cannibals' (Ward, 1890) in Brantlinger (1985, p.199)

What complicates such readings is the avant-garde nature of the television series. *Yizo Yizo 1* is widely acknowledged to have broken new ground in the educational drama genre (see Simpson, 2001; Smith, 2001), and regularly presents carefully considered representations of the problematic of popular youth culture in post-apartheid South Africa. Its portrayals of the sometimes exceedingly harsh conditions in township schools have drawn fire from parents as well as members of the ruling African National Congress Party who have argued that representing such chaos glorifies and institutionalises it. However, unlike some television productions in apartheid years,

¹⁶ There is in this a revision of student protest against apartheid where they are ambiguous signs of both order and disorder (a point to which I will return in more detail in chapters two and four). However, here as in the scene of savage dancing, students' behaviour is represented negatively as a result of the inadequate adult intervention.

this is not a vehicle for a conservative white supremacist ideology, but, on the contrary, a part of the machinery of South African transformation. In *Yizo Yizo* the Department of Education aims to create awareness about topical social issues such as crime, drug and alcohol abuse, rape, sexual harassment and safe sex. However, the invocation of the savage suggests a simplistic timeline where the past is savage and the future is modern. The students are represented as falling back into tribal ways that are depicted as threatening to modern reform, and so, by implication, threatening to democracy – arguably the real concern. This pejorative portrayal of African tradition recalls apartheid and colonial definitions of blackness itself as delinquent.

In all three sets of texts analysed in this dissertation the school features as an interstitial space that is sometimes orderly, more commonly disorderly, but where order is always the chief concern. As the space where discipline (or order) is challenged and enacted, classrooms and school grounds are frequently represented as a South African frontier, a border between civilisation and savagery. De Certeau (1984) describes a frontier as a paradox in that it is both the meeting place and the point of contact in territorial conflict. In this he also suggests that it is potentially a bridge, or an occasion for ‘transgression’ (I will return to his argument in more detail in chapter five).

In *Yizo Yizo 1* (Markgraaf, 2001) the physical setting of the school is highly significant of the possibility for order or disorder. One of the ways in which the destitution of order that follows on the departure of the authoritarian principal, Mr. Mthembu, is announced is in the vandalising of school property. In the scene discussed earlier where Papa Action disrupts the class, the backdrop of graffiti and torn ceiling boards is as much a violation of the school’s order as his toneless chanting. The association between vandalised or otherwise improper school buildings and disruptions is also a feature of news articles and the student photographs. In the spectacle of a school’s disorderly facilities the possibility for ‘development’ is also displayed.

Schools are frequently represented as places where people are modernised, or where civilisation is enacted. In the contemporary context this means that schools sometimes come to signify temporal frontiers between then and now, where ‘now’ invokes a

utopian present/ future where South Africa's transformation is complete.

Representations of schools have a kind of double exposure: they are places of shame in that they are where the savagery of the past irrupts into the present, and they are utopian sites for visions of the future. I am proposing here that in South African discursive practice the school space comes to stand for a broader discursive space. In this, as both frontier and bridge, place of discipline and of transgression, the discursive space that is the school is located in between fantasies of the modern and the traditional.

Mudimbe (1988) describes the distinction between modernity and tradition – what I am referring to as a frontier – as a space. The space between tradition and modernity is most frequently understood in terms of a continuum, where modernity is an improvement on tradition, and so the space between, as Mudimbe points out, designates underdevelopment. Here it is what Mudimbe describes as a 'void'. However, he suggests that this space be understood rather as the sign of a productive tension between what are ultimately fantasies of the modern and the traditional:

[The intermediary space] reveals the strong tension between a modernity that often is an illusion of development, and a tradition that sometimes reflects a poor image of a mythical past. (p.5)

His project of describing African scholarly tradition proves that "the space interrogated by the series of explorations in African indigenous systems of thought is not a void" (p.200). It is a productive space where 'the modalities and implications of modernisation in Africa' have been 'called into question' (p.5). What has emerged in the literature and in my analysis as at the heart of disciplinary discursive practice is a fraught engagement between modernity, savagery and tradition. I will address this topic in more detail in the next chapter but, given its centrality to the discursive practice analysed in this dissertation, I will introduce it as a key aspect of my overall discussion.

Like 'modernity' (and 'savagery') 'tradition', though always a highly significant term, shifts in meaning. Its significance lies in that it is always descriptive of a relationship with modernity and, by implication, with savagery. Tradition refers to modernity in that it is usually situated in the past, as opposed to how modernity usually describes, in the African context, a present that is occluded by the future. It can be simply an oblique referent of savagery. This is especially true in colonial accounts of African

custom, where its savagery is implied almost as a matter of course – what Mudimbe describes as ‘missionary discourse’. ‘Tradition’ is sometimes invoked as a way of re-establishing what is fundamentally a colonial idea of tribalism. This was the case in Bantu Education (see further discussion in chapter two). However, like Mudimbe, Mamdani (1996) describes tradition as an invention both of colonial powers but also as a tool of contemporary Africans as a way of expressing political identity. In its reference to the pre-modern, tradition is sometimes understood as a mode of signification that is in opposition to the idea of the nation. Sometimes this understanding veils a racist discourse where tradition is an ‘other’ form of social ordering that is less evolved than the nation-state. However, ‘tradition’ also sometimes refers to reclaiming a proud history. Certainly the invocation of ‘tradition’ is also sometimes a way of speaking back to the pejorative ‘discourse of development’ (Escobar, 1985). In contemporary South African discursive practice discussions of tradition are sometimes spaces for generative dialogue on the topic of ‘national’ values (see e.g. Mamdani, 2000). This is not surprising given Bhabha’s (1994) description of the position of being outside of, or ‘foreign’ to, the nation as generative of nationhood itself.

What Bhabha describes as a generative foreignness is in reference both to geographical *and* temporal frontiers. In fact, as may be seen most clearly in the policy document *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, nationhood may be understood as a temporal as well as a geographical or psychological condition. Bhabha critiques Foucault’s proposition of enlightenment for its failure to take into account not only its reliance on a racially defined ‘otherness’, but also for its relegation of a racially defined ‘otherness’ to the past. Consequently Bhabha describes the reiteration of a raced subjectivity as a temporal engagement with modernity. In this ‘tradition’ can be seen to signify in contemporary South African discourse as a rupture of a simplistic timeline where the past was either always better or always worse than the present.

Tradition is sometimes invoked to signify an imagined pre-modern idyll, and it is sometimes a colonial fantasy of ‘otherness’. However, the invocation of ‘tradition’ also sometimes indicates a reworking of the simplistic timeline where the traditional past is set against the modern future.

'Tradition' is often a sign of underdevelopment. In Ackers and Hardman's (2001) account of Kenyan teachers' authoritarian practices, it is a sign of the incompatibility of their teaching styles with modern expectations. According to this way of thinking the Kenyan teachers are underdeveloped and maintain the underdevelopment of their students. However, tradition cannot simply be understood either as situated in past or as static and pure. The situation is a lot more complex. For instance, when Ackers and Hardman (2001) describe Kenyan teachers as teaching in traditional ways, they describe an authoritarian, teacher-centred pedagogy that recalls not only colonial and apartheid pedagogies but also colonial and apartheid ideas of what African tradition is. Similarly, Indabawa (1997) posits African culture as disciplinarian, and argues that learner-centred pedagogies disrupt the African idea of community. Mamdani (1996) cautions against understanding African culture as singular, pure or unchanging. It should also be noted that the association of shifts in the performance of pedagogic authority with modernisation as well as with other ideological shifts is not restricted to African or even 'developing' or Southern countries. Keyes (1991), for instance, comments on the problematics of shifts in the performance of pedagogic authority in South East Asia. Similarly, Green (1998) discusses the significance of shifts required of British teachers in the 'post-Dartmouth' period. 'Tradition' cannot be understood as a feature only of the past. It is, for instance in the form of teacher authority, negotiated and renegotiated in the present. Keyes (1991) notes that South East Asian teachers have renegotiated the authority they used to draw from being religious instructors so that they draw authority from being representatives of the state. As much as authority is negotiated, so the practice of tradition is negotiated. To return by way of example to Ackers and Hardman's Kenyan teachers, they find that one of the reasons why teachers rely on an examination-based model is because this is what the community expects. Similarly, Indabawa's point of view is by implication problematised in Tafa's (2000) discussion of how the authoritarian practice of corporal punishment is considered to be traditionally African but can instead be traced to colonial practices.

Tradition and authority, like delinquency, are sometimes functions of dominant ideologies. For instance, Mintrop (1996) describes how East German teachers have to renegotiate the expression of their authority after the reunification of Germany. They felt that students were more out of control; they felt that students had been (adversely)

affected by the liberal culture of the West. As such teachers resisted new modes of enacting authority.

I examine in this dissertation the extent to which important instances of media, government and local school discursive practices reflect and develop the tropes of savagery and modernity. I will argue that the figure of the savage haunts the way in which school discipline and delinquency is imagined in contemporary South African discursive practices. In this discourse the 'modern' is similarly fluid in meaning. Although the term is usually posited in opposition to savagery or to tradition, it has signified such widely differing states as apartheid racial order (e.g. Roos in Chisholm, 1989) and post-apartheid democracy (e.g. *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*). However, where the false binary problematic of modernity and savagery informs ways of knowing and representing school order and disorder, what does not fit into this paradigm is simply left out. The representation of the classroom as simultaneously disciplinary and as transgressive falls outside the episteme that relies on the modernity/savagery binary. 'Working attitude' (4371), one of the student photographs is such a representation. In it a 'working attitude' is indicated by the stereotypical signifiers of pencils poised over blank pages. This process of signification is similar to that in many of the student photographs, where studious students are represented as quiet and somewhat passive recorders of knowledge.



Figure 5. 'Working attitude' (4371)

However, unlike other photographs of 'working' students this one also has the disciplinary technology of ordered desks re-ordered to create a sense of companionable,

disorganised closeness, a different order that is neither ‘under control’ or ‘out of control’.

The masks which students made to protect their identities do not only undermine the viewer’s ability to know who the students pictured are. They also remind the viewer of the difficulty in ‘knowing’ students’ order – and the inaccuracy of interpreting their behaviour in reductive terms as degrees of being savage or modern, underdeveloped or developed. In addition to the episteme of modernity/ savagery excluding ways of representing that exceed its terms, in its insistence on an oscillating movement between modernity and savagery, this episteme does not allow for the expression of resistance or change.

Discourse, practice and change

There is a relationship between how discipline is represented and how it is enacted (Foucault, 1977; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Perhaps the most salient example of this is how school discipline is enacted in written policy and codes of conduct. The representation of discipline in such documents produces South African social order as much as it is reflected there. In another example, which I will explore more fully in chapter two, apartheid and colonial policies regarding raced schooling were instrumental in creating race as a meaningful social organising principle.

Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) distinguish between the production of meaning through activity and through representation, but link these as parts of semiotic elements of social practice. Where social practices are ‘more or less stabilised’ social interactions, or social activity – “they are the arenas within which social life is produced” (Fairclough, 2001) – discourse describes instances or forms where social practice is represented. Discourse therefore takes place in a wide range of forms that include

language (written and spoken and in combination with other semiotics, for example, with music in singing), nonverbal communication (facial expressions, body movements, gestures, etc.) and visual images (for instance, photographs, film). (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p.38).

These may also be termed discursive practices¹⁷ – a term that emphasises the intersection in discourse of producing and reflecting order.

Some social theorists consider that discourse, as Foucault defined it, cannot be changed locally – and that this is a major flaw in his theory of discourse. Foucault has been accused of presenting a bleak view of how things work, where all resistance is always already defused since it is necessary for the dominant discourse (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999), or where there is simply no will to resist (Habermas, 1994):

[W]hy should we muster any resistance at all against this all-pervasive power circulating in the bloodstream of the body of modern society, instead of just adapting ourselves to it?... It makes sense that a value-free analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the opponent is of use to one who wants to take up the fight – but why fight at all? (p.95)

However, when Foucault was asked whether his theory of discourse does not “remove all basis for a progressive political intervention” (1994, p.53), his response was firstly that his theory allows for multiple discourses and multiple systems, and, secondly, that neither discourses nor systems are fixed.

Each discourse undergoes constant change as new utterances...are added to it... [It is] possible to substitute differentiated analyses for the theme of totalising history (‘the progress of reason’, ‘the spirit of the century’). [It is] possible to describe as the *episteme* of a period not the sum of its knowledge, nor the general style of its research, but the divergence, the distances, the oppositions, the differences, the relations of its various scientific discourses: the *episteme* is not a sort of *grand underlying theory*, it is a space of *dispersion*, it is an *open and doubtless indefinitely describable field of relations*. (Foucault, 1994, pp.54-5)

The idea of systemic change is very important in Foucault’s work: his research addresses itself to the moment of change (the moment of ‘transformation’ or ‘threshold’ (1994, p.54). Despite his study not describing resistance except as part of the dominant social order, Foucault maintains the possibility and necessity for resistance and change¹⁸.

¹⁷ Discourse is sometimes mediated through a technical medium – as in written discourse, and telephone and email conversations (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Such communications are distinct from face-to-face conversations in that they compensate for temporal and/or spatial distances between the people communicating. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) define as ‘texts’ such mediated interactions. My analysis draws exclusively on mediated interactions where the social practice of discipline is represented in writing or visually.

¹⁸ To some extent the criticism that Foucault’s theory occludes resistance, can be situated in his theory’s inadequate accounting for the precise relationship between language and practice. For instance, the relationship between the texts analysed in *Discipline and Punish* (1977), and the social practices he critiques is implied rather than detailed. He does not examine changes in social practices systematically. Discourse – in particular the relationship between discourse and textual sources – is not precisely or consistently defined.

All my analyses are against the idea of universal necessities in human existence. They show the arbitrariness of institutions and show which space of freedom we can still enjoy and how many changes can still be made. (1980, p.11)

Exactly because discourse is not fixed and is multiple, an *interaction* rather than simply an action or a state of mind, it constitutes an opportunity for creating meaning¹⁹.

Texts are socioculturally shaped but they also constitute society and culture, in ways which may be transformative as well as reproductive. (Fairclough, 1995, p.34).

This line of argument presupposes a kind of causal relationship between discourse and practice that is thoroughly theorised in Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999). In this argument issues of representation are increasingly important not only in ordering social change, but also in enacting it. This point has methodological implications for them:

In the difficult business of grasping the dialectic of structure and event, we believe it is necessary to be as fully as possible open to the specificity of event as events, at the same time as reiterating how they are constrained by and reproductive as well as productive of structures. Otherwise the analysis runs the risk of becoming a systemic reduction of interaction, a theoretical objectification of practice... (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p.144).

They call for a ‘transdisciplinary’ research practice that takes into account both ‘event’ and ‘structure’:

[T]he opposition between ‘interpretivist’ and ‘structuralist’ social science needs to be transcended in favour of what Bourdieu alternately calls ‘constructivist structuralism’ or ‘structuralist constructivism’ (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p.11) – a way of seeing and researching social life as both constrained by social structures and an active process of production which transforms social structures” (p.1).

Transdisciplinarity

Jaworski and Coupland (1999) point out that the study of discourse is of necessity interdisciplinary, since concepts common to discourse analysis (such as social structure, social relations, ideology) are intertextual in nature, and are defined across disciplines. However, what Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) describe above is more precise, more profound, and more problematic, and has more in common with what Soja (1996) describes as ‘cutting across all perspectives and modes of thought’.

¹⁹ In their discussion of the hegemonic tendencies of media discursive practices, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) make the point that noting the power of communication and information industries implies that consumers are powerless to influence discursive practice. However, people can resist their

Perhaps it is inevitable in a dissertation that exposes and problematises a continued investment in the notion of a frontier – according to de Certeau (1984) both a void and a potential space for positive transgression – that I do so from an interdisciplinary, or rather a ‘transdisciplinary’ position. Originally used by Lefebvre (1991) to indicate the special nature of spatial studies, at the intersection of a number of disciplines and yet more than the sum of its parts, this term has more recently also become associated with “a way of seeing and researching social life as both constrained by social structures and an active process of production which transforms social structures” (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). This term applies to this dissertation in both senses, since my analysis is an investigation of the dual nature of discursive practices as recreating oppressive order and transforming it, and since I am interested in the generative intersection of disciplines. This is not a position that I am completely at ease in – since it precludes completely belonging – nor do I think it is possible to be completely at ease in it. However, it is only in this position that I could bring a variety of ways of knowing and theorising representations of school disruption into dialogue with each other.

I suggest in this dissertation that a dis-ease with order is productive. Here I am influenced by Bhabha’s (1994) discussion of the location of cultural and national identity. He describes a process of producing identity in the fluctuation between exile and belonging. He articulates this process with signification. In the moment between signifier and signified there is the possibility to time-travel, to shift identity. The process of fixing meaning and identity must always fail, and, although Bhabha describes the process as attendant on modernism, and so as politically problematic, he nevertheless describes the assertion of difference as an intervention, and as productive. However, successfully fixing identity or meaning would mean a hegemonic closure on meaning-making. This can be conceptualised practically as, for example, school disciplinary practices solidifying so that they cease to be expressive of local situations. If it were possible for a model South African disciplinary reform to be mapped without wrinkles onto a school’s discursive space, state social control would be complete.

subjection in conversational discourses (p.45). Although media texts do not privilege consumers, these are not the only kinds of interactions that constitute social practice.

For Bhabha, there is a necessary interdisciplinarity – a condition of being foreign – in discussing the necessary disruption of fixity.

It is not adequate simply to become aware of the semiotic systems that produce the signs of culture, and their dissemination. Much more significantly we are faced with the challenge of reading, into the present of a specific cultural performance, the traces of all those diverse disciplinary discourses and institutions of knowledge that constitute the condition and contexts of culture. I use the word ‘traces’ to suggest a particular kind of *interdisciplinary* discursive transformation that the analytic of cultural difference demands. (p.163)

In other contexts a number of theorists have commented on how the stabilisation of interdisciplinary methodologies would compromise exactly their strengths – ‘the ability to bring to bear shifting sets of theoretical resources and shifting operationalisations of them’ (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p.17).

My sense of dis-ease in being at the intersection of a number of disciplines is juxtaposed with a sense that this position has been highly generative, and essential to my specific project. There is a certain symmetry in that the texts that I have found to be most generative of discursive practices that transgress the frontier between savagery and modernity are those texts that also transgress the borders between genres. Similarly to how my anxiety regarding the borders of disciplines has been generative of rich analysis, I must consider that – while the continued investment in ‘frontierism’ is disturbing and a legitimate cause for concern – it is also a sign of a productive dis-ease with that way of knowing, and, properly, a fascination with change.

Outline

In this first chapter I have introduced my key concerns and located my discussion in theories of discourse and discourse analysis. In the second chapter I discuss apartheid and colonial discursive practices as regards school discipline and delinquency. Firstly, raced delinquency was an expression of the ideological project common to colonialism and apartheid of producing race in the definition of savagery and tradition. How discipline and delinquency are represented in state, media and local accounts of school disruption is part of a narrative of savagery and modernity that is a direct development of apartheid and colonial discursive practices. Having in the second chapter presented a historical discursive framework, I turn in the next three

chapters to examining contemporary discursive practice. In how teachers are encouraged in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* (Department of Education, 2000) to be 'born again' as modern there is a continued investment in the binary opposition of modernity and savagery. So, despite the phenomenal shift in de-linking race and delinquency *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* continues to refer to a dichotomy of savagery and modernity that must be raced. The news articles, discussed in chapter four, on school disruption reflect colonial and apartheid tropes of savagery and modernity most clearly. There is a more successful re-appraisal of the frontier between savagery and modernity in the student photographs analysed in chapter five. Here the frontier is transgressed in representations that use the disciplinary space of the school to articulate identities and histories that are outside of a system of binary opposites.

In summary, schools are regularly represented as spaces where society's worst nightmares or cherished dreams are realised. Even within schools themselves the school space is often invoked as a mythical one: it is emptied of its denotative meaning. In this school discipline is a fantasy of order. This is not only true of South African schools, which are the focus of this dissertation. Macmillan (2002), for instance, comments on how articles on school discipline use school issues as a vehicle for expressing political points of view. The school's significance may be related to its disciplinary function in society. In South Africa both the practice and the formulation of school discipline was historically closely associated with the production of race. In this the formulation of school discipline was closely associated with the production of the distinction between savagery and modernity, and of the distinction between them: the frontier. Anxiety regarding school discipline is related to anxiety regarding underdevelopment, or the fear of not being modern enough. I will argue that, as an expression of an anxiety regarding modernity, the reiteration of the savage in admonitions towards stricter discipline is also an anxiety of racial indeterminacy. These ways of seeing school discipline interrupt revisionist attempts to generate local discursive practice where the space between modernity and savagery is properly claimed rather than being described as a shameful void.

2. THE SPECTACLE OF THE SCHOOL: SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND THE PRODUCTION OF RACE

School disciplinary practices were at the heart of the discursive production of race as a meaningful social category in South Africa. As Chisholm (1989) puts it in her description of reformatories and schools of industry between 1882 and 1939:

The answer to all forms of social deviation, whether crime or anti-nationalist working class families, was ultimately discipline and control. Discipline and control, in turn, required coercive strategies. (p. 312)

What Chisholm describes as characteristic of the last years of British colonial rule, is also true of the Afrikaans National Party rule that commenced in 1948 and ended in 1994 (see e.g. Ntshoe, 1999). Although there is some evidence that modes of punishment encoded race, the schooling system was itself what Foucault (1977) would term a 'disciplinary technology' that created and sustained racial categories and racial definition. In the production of the school space as modern, rather than traditional, the school was a discursive space for inventing and producing race. The disciplinary technologies of desks, classrooms, uniforms, rules and regulations were traces of the disciplinary technologies that interpellated indigenous people as savage.

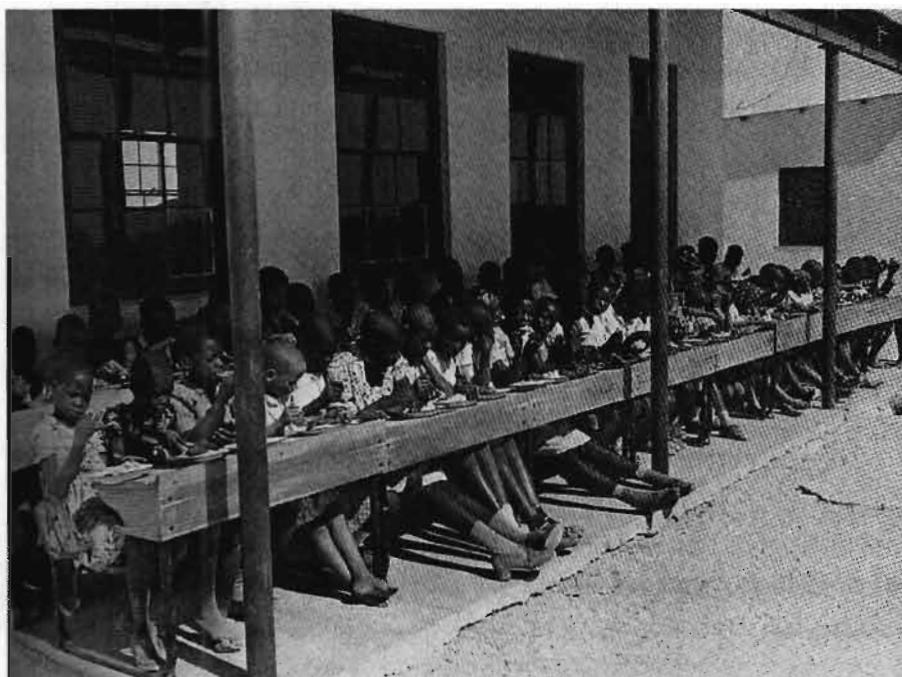


Figure 5. School feeding scheme in Omatjette Native Reserve(1952) in (Hartmann, Silvester and Hayes, 2001, p.59).

The discursive links between the colonial project of disciplining colonized people to an interpellation as 'other' in schools and in the more explicitly racist project of

evolutionary science is illustrated in the links between the following images. The image of the children lined up behind desks in the photograph above recalls the image children and adults lined up to receive food relief in return for labour during the 1929-30 Namibian famine (Hartmann, Silvester & Hayes, 2001, see illustration below).

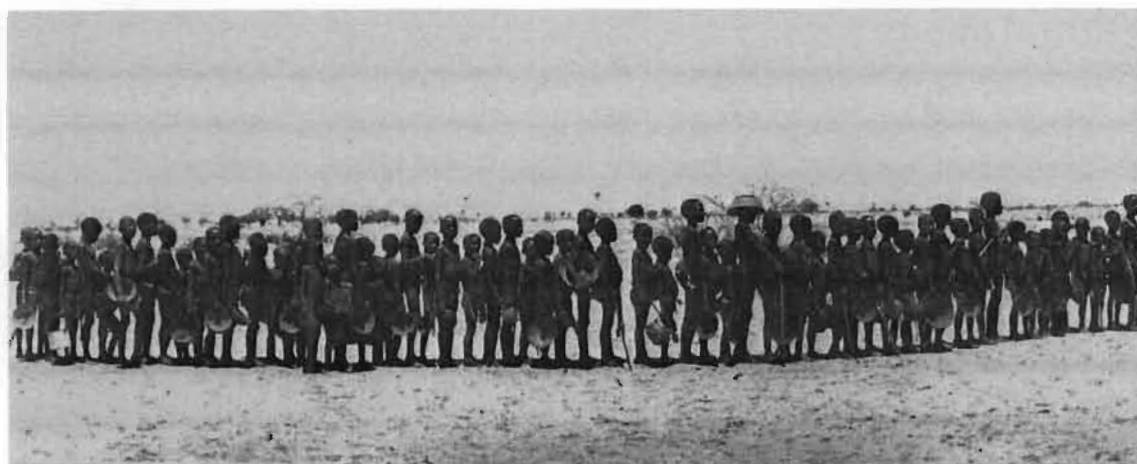


Figure 6. 'Children lined up last'. Famine of the dams (1929-30). C.L. Hahn in Hartmann, Silvester & Hayes, 2001, p.90.

Hartmann et al refer to these scenes as 'panoramas of control', and point out how the process of receiving food was governed not only through lining up, but also through hierarchised orders for lining up. Men lined up first, then women, and then children¹. The disciplinary scene of lining up represented above is one that is reiterated in other photographs by Hahn where he lines up women in traditional clothing (Hartmann et al, 2001) as part of the then common anthropological project of photographing colonised people and categorising them according to physical characteristics (Maxwell, 1999, see illustration below). This project was an important discursive construction of the racialised 'other', that was implicit in colonial policies of education, and in the disciplinary project of the school.

The regulation of the school population echoed but also enacted the regulation of the broader community. The hegemony of race was produced in everyday interactions where its hegemonic function was masked by an ostensible focus on individual circumstance². In this sense schools were important sites both for the production of race

¹ Hartmann et al (2001) also point out how people receiving food relief evaded colonial control by cheating the state:

Women who had husbands present in Ovamboland (instead of going south) were not allowed to receive rations, but they came forward nonetheless. Officials and headmen acknowledged they had no way of controlling this. (p. 90)

² It should be noted that it was also in everyday practices that apartheid's insistence on race was sometimes evaded and resisted. Inasmuch as low-level institutions like schools were places where race

and, as part of the same project, for the production of social control. It is difficult to distinguish between the authoritarian practices and bureaucratic control that enabled the hegemonic discourse of race, and the discourse of race itself.

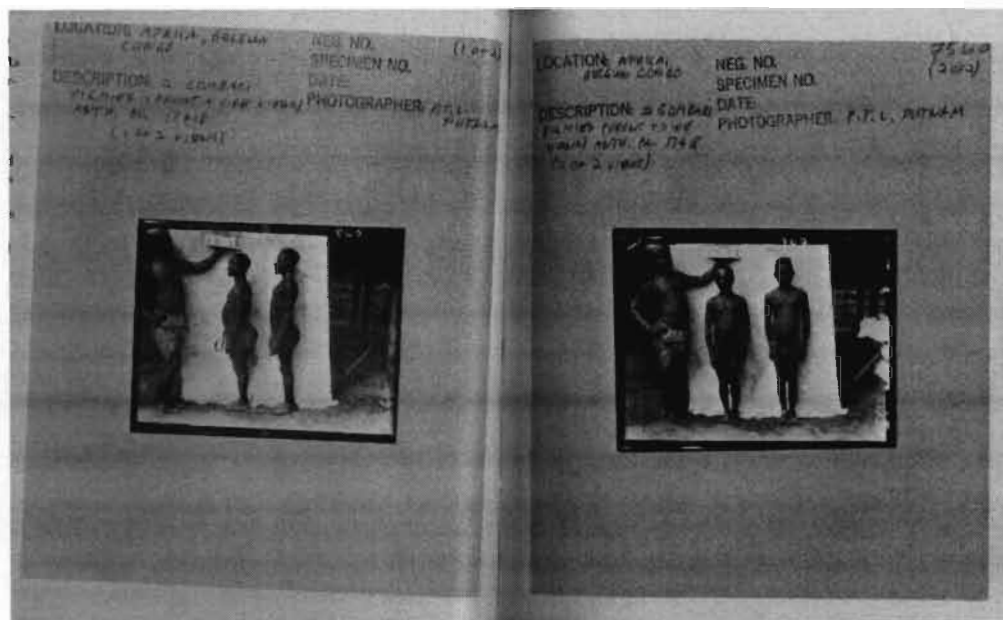


Figure 7. 'Specimen' logbook. Putnam (1928) in Maxwell (1999).

Despite the reliance on centralised bureaucracy, producing race was carried out at the local level as part of everyday dividing practices. Although racial difference was presented as inevitable in apartheid policies, it is important to remember that the everyday practice of classifying people, despite its results having such tremendous consequence, was messy and embedded in highly local dynamics (see also Christie, 1985). In the same way that imperial Britain governed through giving despotic powers to petty chiefs (Mamdani, 1996), the overwhelming centralised state control that characterised apartheid relied on the personal interests of petty bureaucrats. In everyday practice, segregated schooling meant that some school principals determined the racial classification of children seeking school admission. For instance, Watson (1970) describes how the governing body of a school in a 'buffer zone' – an area where both 'European' (or 'white') and 'coloured'³ Capetonians lived – turned away students who

was produced and regulated, they were also places where a raced world-view, and a raced delinquency, was resisted.

³ Under apartheid regulations, one racial category was 'Coloured'. This was similar to the term 'Cape Malay', and together the categories described South Africans who were of mixed race and who were descended from slaves imported from the former Dutch colonies in, for example, Malaysia and Indonesia. As noted above, this category, like the other racial categories, were determined not so much through a strict examination of genetic heritage but through an examination of lifestyle and looks. Although

were 'coloured' but were attempting to be classified 'European' by attending a 'European' school. The school administrators were under some pressure to maintain their classification as a white school.

For the Principal, however, the [borderline] child represents a sinister threat to the White status of his school, his ability to attract teachers and pupils of sufficient number and satisfactory quality, and, ultimately, to his own personal prestige. The teachers of Colander High are aware that in recent years a number of White schools in the area have been reclassified as Coloured 'because the Principals were so kind-hearted'. (49)

This means that this particular principal was 'less Liberal in his interpretation of what constitutes a White person than is the Department, the Board, the Director of Census and Statistics, the Western Province Land Tenure Advisory Board, his feeder schools, and probably, many schools in Cape Town' (p.48). The School Board, consisting of elected parents from the community was inclined to be more lenient. The following are examples of reasons for refusing entrance to 'borderline' children:

Of the 20 applicants who [were recorded as having been] refused admission to the school during two... years on the grounds of colour, 7 were rejected because one or more of the parents did not present themselves before the Committee, while the remaining 123 had appended to his or her name the comments, 'appearance against', 'appearance unfavourable', or 'appearance not acceptable'. Additional reasons were cited in nine cases: 'previous members of family were refused' (3), 'appearance of father' [or mother] (2); 'outside our area' and 'living in predominantly non-European area' (3); and 'brother unsatisfactory'.

Watson cites the following appeals:

Case A

It is noted that his brother is already enrolled at your school. Although he is dark complexioned, the Board had, from very careful investigations established at an interview with the Rev. X that the father, now deceased, was employed as a European. The family is very closely linked with church activities...

Case B

As a result of investigations made and after an interview with the parents, when both sons were present, the Board decided that B is dark but both parents are in possession of European birth certificates, and as far as the Board has been able to establish, the family has European associations. The children also attend the Presbyterian Sunday School...⁴

Race continues to be produced in the everyday practices of school communities, and it is often located in raced delinquency and raced discipline. In his recent study of racism

designating an 'insufficiency' of whiteness, this category afforded somewhat more privileges and rights than being classified 'African'.

in South African public secondary schools, Vally finds that “according to many learners, punishment is integrally part of an unspoken yet persistent racist ethic” (1999, p.58). Many respondents commented on how black⁵ students were punished more readily and more severely than white ones.

White boys don't respect black girls and they don't really get punished for it. (school 702)

If a white kid does something wrong it comes and goes but if a black kid does it lasts forever. (school 211)

Some learners are warned many times but when it's a black person it is once and the second time they will be heavily punished. (school 901)

Learners are not treated the same. Here we are still punished with a switch. (school 604)

Black people are given more discipline by some of the teachers. (school 907)

Sometimes when we tell them about how we feel about things they punish you for being rude. Therefore it seems like we are not allowed to express our opinions to the teachers. (school 701) (p.58)

In some schools harassment of black students by white students is not addressed. Of Vally's sample of 90 schools, only four explicitly address racism or racist name-calling in their codes of conduct (p.57). Students interviewed said the following:

Our school tries to stop racism by just writing it in our yearbooks that racism is a big offence and one will get punished for it but never once have I seen a person being punished for it though it occurs all the time. (school 211)

Yes, there is a lot of racism between white children and black children. White children throw stones at blacks and teachers don't say anything about it. (school 301)

The white people hit us with marulas, throw bricks, sticks and hard soil. They also swear at us and even our parents. We really feel unwanted and outcasted. (school 702)

Pupils do not report racial incidents. Most cases are not serious and go unnoticed. Pupils ignore that the problems are caused by racism but they say it was for something else. (school 401)

When we go to the principal with complaints like name-calling, he always defends them and say, "Ag, we should just leave it" [moet dit los], which is very wrong. (school 301)

There's quite a few people that call each other names and are quite insulting, but yet the people that do that all think it's a joke. (school 702) (p.59)

⁴ It is interesting that both the appeals cited frame racial characteristics in terms of religious behaviour. The imperative to racially segregate and to institute increased state control was regularly described in terms of moral reform (Chisholm, 1989).

⁵ The term 'black' is problematic. Under apartheid several racial categories apart from 'European' were effected. These included 'Indian' and 'Coloured' as well as 'African'. The reader will notice that the term is commonly used by the students quoted in Vally's (1999) study as a term for 'African'. This reflects a popular contemporary South African usage. However, in a significant portion of the resistance movement to apartheid, the divisive tactics of multiple racial categories were evaded in the insistence that the term 'black' included all who would not be classified as 'European'. I will in this chapter use the term in a similar way. Although apartheid proposed a continuum of racial categories between the extremes of being 'African' or 'European', any position that was not 'European' was punished by being less than full citizenship. However, since, given space constraints, I refer in detail only to the British colonial, Bantu Education and Christian National Education models, I am in most cases referring to school communities that would have been classified as 'African' or as 'European'.

Name-calling is mentioned again and again by students as harassment that can be seen as non-violent, that they themselves do not characterise as serious, but which pervades school relations with racist overtones.

Many learners try to trivialise [racist] incidents; others are resigned to them. Frequently, as the data shows, it has horrifying consequences such as stone and bottle throwing, fist and knife fights, the burning of a school (Northern Cape) and the killing of a black person by ex-learners from a newly 'integrated' school (p.59).

Withholding punishment is a further expression of the racial prejudice prevalent in these schools. Although the school ethos is one that supports racism, its explicit expression is channeled through students rather than teachers. School authorities tacitly condone the petty racism expressed by the white students, and so, through the actions of the racist students, express the authorities' own racism. This is a way of controlling the black students who are made to feel uncomfortable and unwelcome in the school.

It is not only the explicit message of the punitive systems in the racist schools but also the mode of discipline that enables the production of blackness as delinquent. Carter (2002) suggests that condoning misbehaviour is part of authoritarian schooling. Carter describes an authoritarian school as having frequent low-level verbal and physical abuse as well as more serious incidents. Staff members typically do not intervene in conflicts between students.

While overtly authoritarian in their classrooms, they would adopt a minimalist presence during non-teaching time (Carter, 2002, p.35).

Carter explains this as some teachers being too tired, some teachers refusing to be authoritarian by avoiding conflict, and, interestingly, as some teachers condoning bullying. Condoning misbehaviour is a powerful way of regulating student behaviour. Macpherson (1983) describes how bullying in a rural Australian secondary school is strictly hierarchised, and the acts of petty violence are systemised and coded. As such it is a means of social organisation that regulates behaviour. In this system bullying students control aspects of student life that are beyond the control of school authorities. Vally's study suggests that this situation also occurs in South African schools. This system replicates colonial authority patterns as described by Mamdani (1996).

However, despite the way in which petty despotism and a discourse of authoritarianism was important to both apartheid and colonial regimes, despotism was in both located in black authority. The way in which the abolition of corporal punishment has been framed

in news accounts is an example of how pervasive such historical discursive practices continue to be. The contemporary proponents of corporal punishment are represented in newspapers either as religious fundamentalists or African traditionalists. In this last category is Eileen KaNkosi Shandu, from the conservative Zulu traditionalist Inkatha Freedom Party and the KwaZulu-Natal Province MEC for Education⁶. She is famously quoted not only as encouraging teachers to disobey the new ruling, but for encouraging her own son's teachers to 'klap him'⁷. Reports such as these associate corporal punishment with 'tradition' – either religious or 'tribal' (for a discussion of the association of tribalism and brutality see also Fair & Astroff, 1991). Similarly, reports of student disruption of schools present students as unruly mobs who enact vigilante action. This representation of students justifies teachers' brutality. At the same time as recreating a colonial⁸ and apartheid understanding of tradition, such reports use the issue of corporal punishment as a vehicle for expressing a meta-narrative where schools are frontiers between modernity and savagery. Equally undermining, in its misrepresentation, of school reform is the racist implication that it is uncivilised black teachers and students who are 'the problem'.

The socio-historical context sketched out in this chapter provides a framework within which to situate the contemporary discursive practices examined in chapters three, four and five. My focus in this chapter is on discursive practices, and where I have made reference to historical data this is intended to inform my discussion of discursive practices. In the next section I will explore the discursive roots of the association of corporal punishment and traditional authority in the colonial definition of African tradition as despotic and brutal. I will go on to discuss how students are posited as savage in the association of student disruption and vigilante action. Finally I will discuss the production of discourses of modernisation.

Despotic authority

African authority was reinvented in colonial and apartheid discursive practice as despotic (Mamdani, 1996). This was part of the myth of the Dark Continent, in which African custom was understood as savage. At the end of this chapter I revisit the idea of

⁶'The widening chasm between policy and reality' *Mail&Guardian*, 8 May 1999.

⁷'Klap' means 'hit' in Afrikaans.

⁸Mamdani (1996) argues that apartheid was the generic form of the colonial state in Africa. I will, however, distinguish between apartheid and colonial states, if only in that apartheid discursive practices drew on but also developed colonial discursive practices as regards race, discipline and education.

tradition as an uneasy articulation of difference. However, the 'tradition' referred to in this section is predicated on the idea of savagery. In representations of corporal punishment and of its proponents it is sometimes implied that classroom authoritarianism, and especially corporal punishment, is traditionally African. For instance, in Kapaale's Botswana study, corporal punishment is represented as being traditionally African, where it is stated that "in most African cultural settings being beaten was and to a large extent still is the commonest form of punishment" (1994, p.18). Academic authorities earlier in the last century support Kapaale's understanding:

Tiberondwa (1978:4) observes that a parent could beat up "any child he found doing anything regarded as wrong". He goes on to quote a Banyaruguru proverb which says: "a parent who says 'if you were my own child I would have punished you,' is a witch"⁹. Among the Tswana, Schapera (1955:181) says: "The punishments administered sometimes take the form of stinting the child in food or clothes, but generally consists in scolding or whipping". Tlale (1992:6) says "corporal punishment is an acceptable mode of discipline in Tswana culture but one should be careful not to abuse it". (p.18)

Similarly, in Ackers and Hardman's (2001) study of Kenyan teachers, the teachers themselves imply that a pedagogic despotism is traditionally African. This is especially ironic in the South African context since school authoritarianism can be directly related to apartheid policy. However, the idea of African authority as savage can be traced to the colonial period.

Savage authority

The belief that corporal punishment is essentially African is ill-founded since authoritarianism can be traced to colonial practices (Tafa, 2002). Tafa (2002) has remarked on how corporal punishment in Botswana schools is understood as the practice, and assertion, of African cultural values, but is actually a practice associated with colonialism. It is a feature of colonial accounts of African authority that it is presented as monolithic and despotic. There is no engagement with the ways in which systems operating on the continent changed over time or differed from each other (Mamdani, 1996).

The presentation of African models of authority as despotic, cruel and unpredictable was part of asserting colonial order, and so colonial narratives of authority were invested in a certain portrayal of African authority. Mamdani (1996) describes one instance of 'producing' African authority as despotic in the face of evidence to the

contrary. I refer to his discussion in some detail, as it is pertinent to how corporal punishment is presented in contemporary accounts as an African custom, and as a sign of savagery. Traditional Zulu authority was often presented as ‘an instance of the most centralised and despotic form of political authority in nineteenth-century Africa’ (Mamdani, 1996). Mamdani notes how in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries involved ignoring the ways in which leaders’ powers were constrained through systems encouraging accountability (pp.44-45). The line of questioning in an interview with the Zulu leader Cetshwayo in 1881 indicates the British Cape Native Laws and Customs Commission’s predilection for regarding African monarchy as absolutist.

144. As the king of the Zulus, was all power invested in you, as king, over your subjects?

– In conjunction with the chiefs of the land.

145. How did the chiefs derive their power from you as king?

– The king calls together the chiefs of the land when he wants to elect a new chief, and asks their advice as to whether it is fit to make such a man a large chief, and if they say "yes" the chief is made.

146. If you had consulted the chiefs, and found they did not agree with you, could you appoint a chief by virtue of your kingship?

– In some cases, if the chiefs don't approve of it, the king requires their reasons, and when they have stated them he often gives it up. In other cases he tries the man to see whether he can perform the duties required of him or not.

147. In fact, you have the power to act independently of the chiefs in making an appointment, although you always consult them?

– No; the king has not the power of electing an officer as chief without the approval of the other chiefs. They are the most important men. But the smaller chiefs he can elect at his discretion...

This transcript shows that ultimate power was not vested in one person, and seniority did not preclude accountability in the Zulu tradition of governance. However, when British colonial authorities implemented ‘customary’ law, it was despotic, irascible and geared towards corruption (Mamdani, 1996, pp.109-137).

From African tradition, colonial powers salvaged a widespread and time-honoured practice, one of a decentralised exercise of power, but freed that power of restraint, of peers or of people... (Mamdani, 1996, p.48).

Despite the answers given in this interview and others, ‘customary law’, the separate law which governed indigenous people in the British colonies in South Africa, and later

⁹ The implication here is that all adults should hold themselves responsible for the punishment of all of the community’s children, not only their own children.

under the apartheid regime, placed absolute power in appointed local administrators, and so creating a system of ‘decentralised despotism’ (Mamdani, 1996, p.48)¹⁰.

What is especially interesting in terms of this dissertation’s concerns with discipline are the questions posed to Cetshwayo’s regarding punishment.

90. Is compassing the death of a chief a crime punishable with death?

– No, only a fine of cattle.

91. Is a man killed for trying to kill a king?

– He is simply fined cattle, and is talked to very severely.

92. Is a man punished with death for disobeying a direct order of the king?

– He is simply fined when he has committed the offence twice before.

93. What is the punishment for a man deserting from his tribe?

– If the chief of his district had given him any property he would be asked by the chief to return that property, and then he would be at liberty to go. (Mamdani, 1996,)

Mamdani comments on how, despite the narrow parameters of the questions, it is clear that Zulu authority could not ‘respond with impunity’ to defiance. However, by contrast, British ‘customary rule’ (i.e. rules ostensibly based on tribal customs) was enforced through cruel and erratic punishment.

Lest one think that the tag “customary” was shorthand for letting things be as they always had been, ... we need to bear in mind that there was nothing voluntary about custom in the colonial period.

More than being reproduced through social sanction, colonial custom was enforced with a whip, by a constellation of customary authorities – and, if necessary, with the barrel of a gun, by the forces of the central state. (Mamdani, 1996, p.50)

The idea that African tradition could be reinvented in the ways described above is made possible by a very particular socio-historic way of understanding Africa. To some extent the possibility of reinventing tradition is allowed by existence of the concept of savagery. It is important to establish how both African tradition and savagery are conceptualised in the colonial discursive practices that informed *educational* policies and practices. These ideas are translated into apartheid discursive practice, and continue to have currency in contemporary South African discursive practice – even in revisionist texts like *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* or *Yizo Yizo*. In order to understand the potent resonance of the idea of savagery, it is necessary to examine its formulation.

The savage African subject invoked in the adaptation and Bantu education models draws on a discourse of civilisation that is in part rooted in 19th century Social

¹⁰ Following Brantlinger’s (1985) line of reasoning, the existence of the ‘chaos’ of despotic ‘customary’ rule, enabled a definition of colonialism as orderly and just.

Darwinism, and that pre-dates the colonisation of Africa. According to Bhabha (1990) “the objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonised as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction...”. One way of understanding Africans, which allowed colonialism, invoked a pastoral idyll peopled by a simple people who were in need of saving. Colonialism¹¹ was necessitated by social and economic pressures, but also by the terms of a discourse of the Dark Continent that had its origins in the humanitarian anti-slavery movement (Brantlinger, 1995).

[T]he success of the antislavery movement, the impact of the great Victorian explorers, and the merger of racist and evolutionary doctrines in the social sciences had combined to give the British public a widely shared view of Africa that demanded imperialisation on moral, religious and scientific grounds (Brantlinger, 1985, p.187).

Brantlinger specifies the following discourses as enabling the myth of the Dark Continent: those of the abolition movement, Victorian exploration, and the Victorian social sciences. In the abolition movement’s literature Africa, firstly, was associated with the atrocities and inhumanity of the slave trade, and, secondly, the literature allowed the British public to conceive of themselves as Africans’ saviours. The dual goals of British expeditions into Africa, to bring Christianity and industry to Africans, were logical extensions of the belief that Africans needed saving from themselves¹². Despite being motivated by the desire to ‘civilise’ Africans, many British observers felt that Africans were not suited to freedom (p. 200). The popularly held belief that Africans were in need of the dual civilising orders of industry and Christianity, but also genetically predetermined to necessary subjugation, was supported by contemporary science at the time. Evolutionary science solidified the idea that African order was the lower order of the less evolved, and as such was, in its savagery, closer to the bestial. African order is presented as savage (Mudimbe, 1988; Hall, 1997; Mamdani, 1999)¹³.

¹¹ Mudimbe (1988) describes colonisation as a three-part system affecting its subjects on a physical, intellectual and spiritual level. So ‘the procedures of acquiring, distributing and exploiting lands’ constitute ‘the domination of physical space; the ‘policies of domesticating natives’ constitute ‘the reformation of natives’ minds’ and the ‘manner of managing ancient organisations and implementing new modes of production’ constitutes the ‘integration of local economic histories into the Western perspective’ (Mudimbe, 1988, p.2).

¹² Important Victorian explorers’ writings take the form of ‘non-fictional quest romances’ where the authors are heroes struggling through dark ‘enchanted or bedevilled lands’ towards the goal of ultimately returning safely home to the light (p.195). In both missionary and explorer accounts Africans feature as the new proletariat, who should be grateful for the opportunity to further civilisation through their manual labour.

¹³ The representation of African order as savage was reiterated in apartheid media reports. The MMP report (1999) notes that other African countries and African people were routinely represented during apartheid in the South African media as ‘riddled with disasters, diseases, corruption, communism and incompetence’ (26 in HRC 1999).

The term 'savagery' is subsumed into the signifier 'tradition', but in how tradition is placed as archaic (and so as inferior to modern progress) the term continues to carry traces of the pejorative meanings of 'savagery'. The discursive formulation of tradition as archaic, monolithic and unchanging was an important disciplinary technology for both colonial and apartheid regimes. Education policies were paramount in establishing 'tradition' and insodoing in establishing race as a meaningful social category.

'Tradition' and race

Both the colonial and apartheid education policies represent a heavy investment in racial difference¹⁴. Although education had operated in a racially segregated way since early in South Africa's colonial history, this was not the result of state control until the 20th century. Loram (1917), in *The education of the South African native*, proposes an entire 'shadow' education system for black South Africans that standardised racial segregation. Based on the United States Tuskegee model¹⁵ of racially defined pedagogics, Loram's model relies on vocational training and manual labour. Since Loram was an official in the colony of Natal, his ideas were never applied throughout what would later be the republic of South Africa. However, his discursive articulation of race and education in schools' 'disciplinary technologies' (Foucault, 1977) is both indicative of contemporaneous practices and is a good example of a British colonial model of education¹⁶. The disciplines studied, such as geography and history, would be offered in relation to what Loram saw as the immediate interests of the 'native' student. In other words, for example, it is not so much the discipline of geography that would be taught, but the topography of South Africa¹⁷. These more academic subjects would be combined with 'practical hygiene'¹⁸, 'religious and moral training', and industrial

¹⁴ I will focus here on the British 'adaptation' education model. Although missionary schools, who were technically independent of British colonial education policy, were influential in shaping educational discursive practices in South Africa, they were to a great extent reliant on colonial authorities for financial support, and so were not wholly independent (Mackenzie, 1993). In addition, as with the adaptation model, 'tradition' was understood as inferior (Mackenzie, 1993; Mudimbe, 1988).

¹⁵ The Tuskegee model was a system of separate vocational training for black students, and is named after a Southern American college (Bude, 1983).

¹⁶ In fact Loram went on to influence the models of education in other British colonies in Africa (Fleisch, 1995).

¹⁷ Later, in the intermediary level, the curriculum introduces a discourse of commercial exchange. Nature studies now include an aspect designed to make natives 'more discriminating purchasers'. Geography is now focused on the British Empire and 'the objects of exchange between them' (286).

¹⁸ Cleanliness was an important colonial signifier. Hall (1997) notes how through advertising soap came to stand for the project of keeping 'the imperial body clean and pure in the racially polluted contact zones' (p. 241).

training in, for example, sewing, agriculture and ‘native crafts’. The teaching of ‘native crafts’ in particular was typical of the colonial practice of reinventing and institutionalising local tradition in the service of a racist ideal.

Loram’s approach is in keeping with the British colonial ‘adaptation’ education model. In this model an education system should present skills and knowledges considered suitable to a local population, one that ‘adapts’ to local traditions and ‘preserves’ them. White (1996) characterises the colonial British desire to incorporate local traditions into education reform as evidence of genuine interest in African needs. However, this interest in the local environment can be seen as self-reflexive rather than a true engagement with local needs. As Bude (1983) points out, the adaptation model, focused firmly on agricultural skills, refused to take into account the societal shifts already taking place at that time¹⁹. Subsistence farming was shifting to export-oriented cultivation. Urbanisation was increasing. However, the adaptation model wrote into being an African subject in an African landscape with an African subjectivity that was wholly in relation to Western needs and desires. This subject was constructed as less capable than a Western subject, and lived a ‘traditional life’ embedded in a rural landscape in a static, freeze-frame time untouched by ‘modern’ problems of urbanisation or economic competition. The invention of modernity and savagery demonstrated here can be traced through to how tradition and modernity are used in contemporary discursive practice.

Bantu Education, implemented in 1952, is rooted in the British adaptation model of colonial education of which Loram’s (1917) thesis is a good example. As in the colonial British model, Bantu Education framed black schools as institutions “for the transmission and development of black cultural heritage” (Christie & Collins, 1982, p.59). The separation of schools along tribal lines, the curriculum with its language

¹⁹ Bude (1983) points out that all these attempts at massive Western reform of African education systems have failed in that they were short-lived, losing support soon after initial implementation. The reasons for these failures include exorbitant cost, teachers being overtaxed, and an incompatibility between the demands of the curriculum and teachers’ pedagogy. Reforms were also not introduced uniformly across a system. These reforms also usually relied heavily on ‘expatriate pushers’ (Bude, 1983, p.348). In short, the reforms are neither generated nor supported domestically. Most importantly, of course, these reforms were not acceptable to the general populace.

Dissent towards the adaptation model took many forms. In some situations where a change was unpopular, attrition was allowed to take place. Dissent was also expressed in more positive forms in attempts to coordinate western and traditional educational forms. Bude (1983) reads this as a desire to maintain cultural traditions while being prepared for social change. African-American leaders, such as Du Bois, also rejected the adaptation model.

teaching provisions, and the laws governing work and movement of black people emphasised what Christie and Collins term 'retribalisation'. All students took academic and vocational courses. In higher-primary schools subjects like Gardening and Agriculture were added. Post-primary schools were "to provide the types of educated Bantu necessary for the development of Bantu society" (Christie & Collins, 1982, p.70). Academic post-primary schools had a similar but not identical curriculum to white schools. It is clear here how the discursive invention of tradition is part of inventing blackness as inferior. Christie and Collins (1982) discuss how the homeland policy²⁰ was pivotal to the project of apartheid. Like the vocational training deemed suitable by the regime for those destined only to 'hew wood and draw water', "both politically and economically, homelands would provide a focus for black aspirations outside of a common framework and would thus contribute to continued domination by whites" (Christie & Collins, 1982, p. 67). Most black secondary schools were established in these reserves, as were tertiary institutions.

According to the Eiselen Commission (1951), who recommended the institution of Bantu Education, Western schooling, in the form of the mission schools, had caused indigenous people to be alienated from their society (Fleisch, 1995). Its proponents presented Bantu Education as the remedy for this 'problem'. It is this belief that is central to Bantu Education's effect. It was 'efficient' to segregate because of the need for schools to be in harmony with 'existing social structures'. The emphasis on efficiency is characteristic of a discourse of modernisation. The construction of tradition, or 'retribalisation', is an essential part of the modernist project. I return later in this chapter to the modernist project's dependency on 'tradition'. The point I want to make here though is that white supremacy was expressed in the discourse of modernisation, and continued to be closely associated with the construction of tradition, or 'retribalisation' through the school as disciplinary technology and through the disciplinary technologies in schools.

Christie and Collins (1982) argue that Bantu education had a hegemonic function that was expressed through retribalisation. Retribalisation was not only instituted in the

²⁰ The 1959 Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act allowed for separate black governments of pockets of land. These governments were under the control of the state. Although this law was only enacted in 1959, the concept it expressed was present in, for example, the migrant labour system and the labour bureaux. Starting with the Eiselen Commission, political rhetoric as well as political practice linked education was very firmly linked to the homelands system.

curriculum, but in the close conceptual link between Bantu Education policy and the homeland system. The idea of retribalising differed slightly from what the adaptation model was attempting to do. In the adaptation model, the cultural aspects of education were framed as a reflection of local reality – as a way of preserving an idea of primitive purity. For Bantu Education, this process of transmitting culture is framed as a remedy for Western contamination, and as a matter of efficiency (Fleisch, 1995) – as modernisation. However, a similar African subject is invoked in both the adaptation and Bantu Education models. Both feature a rural future for Africans, and both feature a curriculum where knowledge and skills were adapted to a specific cultural setting. Even further, both systems were active in creating this culture that was to be transmitted. In both an idea of African culture as traditional, rural and static is created and then put into practice in the teaching (and defining) of ‘native crafts’²¹, vernacular languages and manual labour.

As Chisholm points out in her discussion of reformatory schools, the production of blackness was related to the production of whiteness. While Bantu Education institutionalised a colonial invention of tribalism as conflated with underdevelopment, Christian National Education (CNE)²² institutionalised in schools for white children the idea of black enfranchisement as threatening, and connected black enfranchisement with a decline in moral values (Christie, 1985). At the same time CNE institutionalised a division between Afrikaans and English-speaking South Africans – a project that is in some ways in keeping with the project of black ‘retribalisation’. The most obvious forms of indoctrination were the Youth Preparedness and Veld²³ School programmes (Christie, 1985) which were compulsory for white children at public schools. In addition, however, syllabi also featured inaccurate historical accounts of the colonisation of Southern Africa as well as simplistic tribal accounts of black South Africans. Compulsory Youth Preparedness programmes took the form of gendered military training in schools (such as marching and gun drilling) and activities designed to heighten white fears (such as regular emergency drills in response to mock-helicopter

²¹ For example, Fleisch comments on the how the baskets woven in native crafts classes were different from traditional designs (1995, p.151).

²² CNE has its roots in Afrikaans resistance to the British occupation of the Cape Dutch settlement in 1806. The resistance to the imposition of the English language and British values in schools was formalised after the Second World War in CNE schools which were short-lived due to lack of funding, and because CNE values were eventually incorporated into mainstream education for white children (Christie, 1985).

²³ Veld means ‘bush’ or ‘savannah’ in Afrikaans.

attacks or bombings of schools) (Christie, 1985). Attendance of Veld Schools was compulsory in the Transvaal province, and at these camps children performed versions of military basic training that involved a combination of punishing physical activities and Christian religious, moral and political indoctrination (Christie, 1985). In the lectures black empowerment was equated with communism and both were associated with the fall of civilisation, and with the slaughter of white people.

Authoritarianism, apartheid and control

Describing corporal punishment and authoritarianism in schools as African tradition obscures not only the importance of local despotism to colonial rule, but also the importance of authoritarianism to the apartheid state. Apartheid discursive practice prioritised control and efficiency – ‘modernisation’ – while at the same time producing a disorder that demanded control. One example is the severe overcrowding of classrooms, that were created by apartheid policies, but that continue to be cited as a reason for teachers to rely on an authoritarian pedagogy²⁴. The systemic disorder is accounted for racially – as are the authoritarian practices used to control the disorder. This is an excellent example of how the ostensible failure of a system can in fact be necessary to it (Fairclough, 2001). Apartheid’s authoritarian practices were predicated on a certain degree of chaos, which it also produced. The disorder it produced justified the authoritarian practices, but also proved its original premise: raced delinquency.

Bantu Education certainly produced crowded classrooms. Bantu Education was intended to increase mass schooling in lower grades (Christie & Collins, 1982, p. 70). Promotion in the first four years of school was automatic, but a test had to be passed in order to move into ‘higher-primary school’. A ‘double session’ system was introduced where the school day was shortened by one-third in order for two groups of students to occupy the same (inadequate) school facilities. The fact that white teachers were phased out of black schools and the expansion of the lower-primary school system meant that a lot of black teachers were needed. New programs of teacher training were formulated to answer this need, and the numbers of teachers without matriculation increased, while the numbers of teachers with university degrees decreased. The pupil to teacher ratio rose significantly and was at 54 to one in 1960. Due to this and to a number of other factors, academic standards dropped (Christie & Collins, 1982, p. 71). The South

²⁴ Student to teacher ratios rose to 54:1 in 1969 (Christie & Collins, 1982).

African education sector saw very rapid expansion in the period 1976 to 1996²⁵. The fact that most of the expansion was in black schools means that, in keeping with apartheid policy, this expansion was severely under-funded. Although in a similar period the difference in the ratio of spending on black and white pupils improved, that ratio was still one to five in 1990²⁶.

In addition to creating conditions of overcrowding that are frequently cited as justifications for authoritarianism, Bantu Education and CNE naturalised a system of domination. Both Loram's 'adaptation' model and the apartheid education models relied on centralised state control²⁷. The most important reform that Loram (1917) proposed is that the administration of Native Education should be centralised under state control in the form of the Department of Native Education. At the time of his writing, many authorities had some control over black education: especially missionary authorities and Native councils. Loram is quite open about the fact that this dispersed control means that the state's political doctrines can easily be undermined. Missionaries are to be brought on board by unifying them in a Missionary Board of Advice and by appointing them as school managers. As to the Native Councils, the inclusion of Europeans (missionaries or officials) and their proposals being subject to department approval means that their influence is already severely curtailed. His proposition of centralised control also has implications for the control of a separate syllabus and for the state control of teachers.

The control of what actually occurred in schools relied on a hierarchy of inspectors and supervisors empowered to examine and evaluate teaching practice as well as student knowledge. Loram (1917) proposed further state control over teachers in that he makes provision for a special institution to train native teachers. He argued that it is more efficient to have separate staffs for the Department of Native Affairs. Loram's

²⁵ In this period school-going students increased from 3.5 million to 12 million. Whereas in 1976 there were only 18,000 schools, in 1996 there were over 27,000. The number of teachers grew correspondingly from 145,000 to 375,000. Most of the expansion was in black schools, and mostly at the secondary level.

²⁶ The budgets allocated to black education in 1972/3 was R117 million, and in 1990 R2 642 million (Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999).

²⁷ In South Africa, before 1953 there was no standardised system for black schools (Christie & Collins, 1982; Sturm, Groenedijk, Kruithof & Rens, 1998). Apart from the mission schools there were also state and community schools. Although the central government was responsible for funding, provinces were responsible for control of schools (Christie & Collins, 1982).

administrational reforms introduced bureaucratisation to South African education²⁸.

They not only introduced the idea of the state controlling education but they introduced the idea of the state. This is most apparent in his reference to the 'South African native'. He posits a single problem with a single solution to be effected by a single state body²⁹.

Similarly, Bantu education was based on centralised and all-encompassing state control (Christie & Collins, 1982; Fleisch, 1995). Here the state had control over teachers (including their training), curriculum, advisory bodies, fiscal management and even the physical location of schools. The Eiselen commissioners believed that education should be centrally planned to meet predetermined goals in a systematic and efficient way. These educational goals were translated into administrative goals, and pedagogic achievement was defined in terms of bureaucratic efficiency. The Eiselen Commission proposed that control of black schools be vested in a Union Board of Native Education. This board controlled examinations, discipline, development and planning, the budget, and aspects of regional planning. Not only was the new board more powerful, but its composition was different. Whereas missionary bodies dominated the previous board, members of government departments dominated this board. The Bantu Development Authority and the Department of Bantu Education would control policy and planning. As such 'specialised functions', policy and planning were in the hands of professionals who were answerable to the Minister, rather than to the public³⁰. The first step towards achieving the Van Eiselen Commission's goals of separate cultural and economic development through education, was establishing centralised control and administration of all schools for black South Africans. Before Bantu Education, of the 7000 schools admitting black South Africans, 5000 were missionary schools. By 1959 all black schools, except for 700 Catholic schools, were under the control of the Native Affairs

²⁸Loram's (1917) work is interesting with regard to this conceptualisation of state control, as he operates somewhere on the edges of the British adaptive system and Bantu Education. His work articulates the British adaptive model well, but, unlike the colonial British model, it also clearly pivots on centralised state control.

²⁹Tellingly, in this positing of the 'South African native' Loram undermines his own thesis: that cultural difference is the only efficient way of understanding African education. This tension is one that may also be seen in the administration and practice of Bantu Education. At the same time as racial authority is exerted in simplistic and essentialised terms, racial identity becomes more and more plural. The simple dichotomy implied by the term 'the South African Native' is belied by a multiplicity of cultural practices, traditions and homelands that need to be supported in order for this 'South African native' to be 'efficiently' catered for. For instance, by the end of apartheid in 1994, despite (or perhaps because of) the hegemony of the Bantu Education Department, there were 17 separate education departments.

³⁰This discourse of expert control, as well as very similar recommendations, are to be found in the Teachers College dissertations of both Loram and Malherbe (Fleisch, 1995).

Department³¹.

A feature of the centralised strictly hierarchised administrative system described above was a culture of authoritarianism that extended into schooling practice. Fuller (1999) finds that few post-apartheid teachers are willing to give up didactic pedagogical practices (p.231)³². Chisholm (1999) contextualises this in terms of how teacher identity was formulated during apartheid years. She notes that, while white schoolteachers could rely on some autonomy and were also involved in policy formulation, “control over teachers’ work in black schools was bureaucratic, hierarchised and authoritarian” (p.115). This meant that many black schools under apartheid could be characterised as having an authoritarian institutional discourse³³. Teacher authority became politically very charged with teachers identifying themselves either as ‘professionals’ or as ‘workers’ (in which case they identified themselves with the struggle against the state) (p.123). As such teacher authority became a part of political identity, and controlling teachers became part of maintaining the apartheid status quo³⁴.

The process was subtle but significant. In influential policy texts, teachers were presented as lazy and engaged in a useless paper-chase which had little effect on classroom practice except to remove them

³¹ Centralised control first took the form of requiring registration, which could be refused, with the Native Affairs Department of community, government and private state-aided schools. In 1955 night schools and part-time programs for black South Africans also came under state control (Christie & Collins, 1982, p. 60). This had dramatic impact. Whereas in 1953/54 there was an enrolment of 12,000 people in night schools, almost all closed in later years (Christie & Collins, 1982, p.60). In 1959, the Extension of Universities Act closed white universities to black South Africans. Black universities were opened and linked to the homeland policy: in other words, they were located in or near areas of land far from urban centres which had been set aside for certain cultural groups.

³² Macdonald’s (1990, 1991 in Taylor & Vinjevoold, 1999, p.134) studies of Botswana primary schools, that share a similar colonial history to South Africa, showed that the dominant pedagogical approach encouraged students to be passive in learning. Classroom activities were geared towards acquiring information, and the predominant form of classroom interaction was a teacher talking to students with students sometimes chanting responses. Rote learning was overwhelmingly favoured. Fuller’s (1999) study indicates that there is a similar pedagogical approach prevalent in many contemporary South African schools. Additional studies have shown that in some schools teacher-centred practices are favoured. It was commonly observed in the President’s Education Initiative studies (Taylor and Vinjevoold, 1999) that lessons are dominated by ‘teacher talk’ and low level questions, and can be characterised as lacking structure and activities that foster skills like investigation and curiosity. In addition they note that there is very little group work or other interaction between students, and that students do very little reading and writing. The kind of authoritarian and ritualised control exercised by many teachers in South African schools can be ascribed to huge classes, scarce instructional resources, and a centrally prescribed curriculum (Fuller, 1991).

³³ However, it should also be noted that there were many schools that escaped this paradigm.

³⁴ The South African Schools Act (1995) attempts to change institutional culture by giving more powers to parents (Sayed, 1999). However, this is problematic for creating an equitable school system because it means that school resources and policies are still heavily influenced by money and race (Sayed, 1999). Chisholm (1999) attempts to assess the success as far as teachers are concerned of moves to democratise schools. She shows that this process is one in which teachers have a lot of agency. In some cases they openly resist the reforms for their impact on the teacher’s role and authority, and in others the reforms are negotiated into even more democratic school organisational forms (p.125).

from the classroom. This representation produced its policy correlative: the need for appraisal of the performance of teachers and the use of the performance appraisal for control and discipline of teachers. (p.123)

Teachers, and more so black teachers, were the subjects of strict bureaucratic controls. With restricted access to decision-making bodies, it was very difficult for black teachers to impact substantially on curriculum formulation. Similarly, the pedagogic norm was a bureaucratic and authoritarian approach. 'Fundamental Pedagogics', the dominant apartheid theoretical discourse at South Africa's black universities and colleges and a powerful vehicle for apartheid ideology, has been described as a means of reducing critical reflection, a justification for authoritarian practices, and a means of silencing teachers (Enslin, 1990 in Taylor & Vinjevold, 1999, p.133).). In addition teachers were subject to strict controls regarding their classroom practice, and this was further limited by large classes (Nkomo, 1990; Kallaway, 1984 in Chisholm, 1999, p.121).

Apartheid curricula were not only white, male and bureaucratically controlled, but also geared to ensuring ideological control and subjection. Such control was exercised through tight control of what teachers could teach and how they could teach it. (Chisholm, 1999, p.121)

In contemporary discursive practice authoritarian teachers are described in terms of a binary opposition of modernity and savagery that reiterates colonial and apartheid definitions of African tradition (see chapters three and four). However, rather than being signs of 'tradition', authoritarian classroom practices were completely in keeping with the 'modernising' project of apartheid as expressed in authoritarian state control.

Corporal punishment and associated authoritarian practices are on the one hand normalised by the implication that they are traditionally African, and, on the other, made another sign of raced delinquency. Corporal punishment and other authoritarian practices are also naturalised as understandable responses to the innate savagery of students. This narrative is implicit in the common contemporary representation of students as vigilante mobs, who, it is suggested, can only be controlled by extreme measures. This narrative can be seen especially in contemporary newspaper reports on school disruption (see chapter four), and is, like the idea of African despotism predicated on the idea of raced delinquency.

The savage mob

Disruptive students are regularly described as mobs in the contemporary South African news articles analysed in chapter four. Here students are represented as meting out vigilante justice to errant authorities, which include the police, their parents and their teachers. Although there is little discussion of why students behave this way, the implication in the reports is mostly that they have had inadequate role models. This lack of explanation is perhaps rooted in how well established the idea of the student mob is in South African discursive practice. In its original use, in apartheid discursive practice, the tendency towards mob behaviour is located in what is presented as a racial predisposition towards savagery. The former use of this trope of savagery makes it suspect in the post-apartheid context, and, as I discuss in chapter four, it continues to support racist narratives of school disruption.

In the South African context the idea of the (black) unruly mob is located in the apartheid redefinition of savagery in a black proletariat, and in the association of mass action and savagery. The association of savagery and a black proletariat is clearly related to colonial discursive practice, where Africans were framed as in need of (manual) industry. However, locating delinquency in mass action is a dominant feature of apartheid discursive practice. Where colonial discursive practice tends to frame Africans and Africa in terms of an agricultural idyll, apartheid discursive practice also constructs African savagery in terms of industrialisation.

Industry and savagery

In Brantlinger's (1985) account of how Victorian ideas of race and class were conflated in imperialist goals, how race was understood enabled the creation of a new African proletariat. Christie and Collins (1982) describe Bantu education and other apartheid government policies as less concerned with racial superiority than with the reproduction of labour. However, given Brantlinger's account, it is possible to see how apartheid ideas of what work black South Africans were suited for both enabled the reproduction of labour *and* expressed racial superiority. In apartheid discursive practice political mass resistance is subsumed into mass industrial action, or into a mass response to conditions of industrialisation. The articulation of savagery in terms of industrialisation is

important to my discussion because student delinquency is frequently understood in terms of mass action.

The colonial idea of savagery in the traditional discussed in the previous section can be traced through to the apartheid idea that black South Africans need industrial development. The racist South African discourse of producing 'modern' labour is part of the production of 'traditional' life started under British colonial rule. The vocational training proposed in Loram's (1917) *Education for the South African native* is supported in the proposals of the Eiselen Commission in 1951 on education for black South Africans.

We should not give the natives an academic education...If we do this we shall later be burdened with a number of academically trained Europeans and non-Europeans, and who is going to do the manual labour in the country? (Eiselen, 1951 in Christie and Collins, 1982, p.70).

Vocational training is supported by the country's need for manual labourers, but, at the same time, by the idea that black South Africans must live a 'traditional' life.

[E]ducation practice must recognise that it has to deal with a Bantu child, i.e. a child trained and conditioned in Bantu culture, endowed with a knowledge of a Bantu language and imbued with values, interests and behaviour patterns learned at the knee of a Bantu mother. These facts must dictate to a very large extent the content and methods of his early education...The schools must also give due regard to the fact that out of school hours the young Bantu child develops and lives in a Bantu community, and when he reaches maturity he will be concerned with sharing and developing the life and culture of that community (Eiselen, 1951 in Christie and Collins, 1982, p.69).

What are the values deemed appropriate? These are

[s]ocial patterns and values which make a man a good member of his community, a good parent and a useful member of his society. (He should, for example, possess such qualities as punctuality, initiative, self-confidence, sense of duty, persistence, sociability, mannerliness, neatness, reliability, power to concentrate, etc.) (Eiselen, 1951 in Christie and Collins, 1982, p.69)

These are also values that make for a docile worker. Formulating skill in terms of ideological values is characteristic of apartheid education from its inception, and is sustained in the 1970s and 1980s. Kraak (1991), in his comparison of vocational training in South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s with British 'new vocationalism' of the same period, comments on how in both these systems 'skill' is formulated as an ideological attribute rather than a technical requirements (p.416). Kraak gives the following example:

It is quite true to say that our black workers need better education and training. If, however, they are to play a meaningful role as members of industrial society, they will need much more than purely technical ability. They will have to accept the value systems of this society and must be willing and,

indeed, eager to contribute socially to the formal and informal organisation in a company. This means learning a range of social skills. (Horner, 1980 in Kraak, 1991, p.416)

Nasson (1990) notes how the 1981 De Lange Report's focus on administrative and managerial aspect of schooling effectively takes the focus away from the political nature of education policy. The "pervasive metaphors of scientific, technological and managerial efficiency" imply that education reform is apolitical and that technocratic reform will solve problems that are political in nature (Nasson, 1990, p.153). This kind of educational reform, which means no real reform at all and which legitimates educational inequality, is presented as modernising and in terms of industrial needs (Nasson, 1990).

Student mobs

There is a strong association made between savage mobs and youth. In the following excerpts from rightwing editorials following the 1986 Crossroads incident (where police stood by while a local faction attacked residents of the informal settlement, shooting at them and burning their shacks (Black Sash, 1986) 'jungle-law' is practised by youth.

Radicals, mostly youths, have through terrorism, intimidation, necklace murders and firearms established a culture of violence. They dictate boycotts, stay-away actions and keep the area in turmoil. (*Die Volksblad* 23 May 1986 in Phelan, 1987, p.205)

In the third excerpt 'radical youth' are described as what holds communities back from proper participation in modern industry.

Black people who want to be left in peace to earn their daily bread are using clubs, hatchets and arson to revolt against the "Comrades" or "Makabanas" as the young radicals are known. (*Die Volksblad* 22 May 1986 in Phelan, 1987, p.205)

The association of youth and disruption is not exclusive to South African discursive practices. For instance, Schissel (1997) describes this discursive phenomenon in the Canadian context. Similarly, Kelly (2001), drawing on Australian examples, comments on how youth has come to be defined as a period of being 'at-risk' – a discursive practice that recalls Foucault's definition of the 'pre-delinquency' (1994). However, what I wish to draw attention to here is not so much the association of youth and disorder as the association of in the South African context of youthful delinquency with savagery. While the youth referred to in these excerpts as 'comrades' were not necessarily attending school, certainly school-going youth were very important in the South African resistance to apartheid. Student protests were significant in the struggle against apartheid, and have also, as iconic signs, become significant of popular resistance.

Students' resistance to apartheid and apartheid schooling was conflated with both the form and the content of worker protest (Naidoo, 1990; Hyslop, 1990). Students in Cape Town protesting apartheid derided teachers for having 'petty bourgeois attitudes' (Naidoo, 1990, p.129). Students included among their demands better pay for teachers: as one placard put it "You Pay the Teachers Peanuts and They Give us Monkey Education" (Naidoo, 1990, p.129).

Student protests, which most often took the form of school boycotts, were a powerful force in the struggle against apartheid, with the 1976 Soweto uprising, pictured below, only the most famous and arguably the most influential of many. Bantu Education and the struggle against it meant that township schools often became the settings for violent clashes between students and police. School authority was compromised in students' eyes due to its affiliation with the state, and this also resulted in disorder (Naidoo, 1990; Chisholm, 1999). In the apartheid context, students saw the symptoms of the state's class and racial oppression in the actions of their teachers and usurped control on those grounds. Naidoo (1990) quotes a student pamphlet:

[Teachers]... are a misfit lot condemned to the Sewage Tanks of Athlone. Their sole concerns are their checks, their bonds on houses, their cars... (p.129).

School disruption was a legitimate and, subsequently, legitimated part of the struggle against apartheid.

Progressive students have to use methods like hijacking the school concert to impart relevant anti-apartheid discourses (Naidoo, 1990, p.128)

Fuller describes schools that looked like they had been hit by bombs, principals who had been attacked and killed by students, or who could not maintain order in schools because of challenges by teachers and teacher unions:

Many schools were closed by the DET [Department of Education and Training, dealing with black education] after several principals were threatened or attacked, at times by township youth who came from outside the school. During the apartheid regime's final year, more than 1.6 million student-days of classes were lost within secondary schools (*New Nation*, 1993)...Mid-year exams were cancelled in May. (Fuller, 1999, p.236).

Schools were thrown into disorder in the process of student protests. However, student protests were at the time, and continue to be, significant of more than the local disruption of specific schools.



Figure 8. 1976 Soweto student uprising. Magubane³⁵ in Sanders, 2000.

The illustration above is one of the most powerful examples of this genre, and depicts a scene from the 1976 Soweto student uprising. Sanders (2000) describes the image above as illustrating the shift in civil protests from passive resistance to confrontational resistance. Mamdani (1996) supports the association of the 1976 student protests with a more aggressive popular stance towards the apartheid state. He links the rise of migrant workers in the 1970s with the student protests of the same period, describing the strike movement as ‘a magnetic spark that attracted a variety of hitherto dispersed forces’ (p.213).

Student resistance was routinely framed as being out of control – in terms of madness and, ultimately, savagery. An example of this was the remark made by Buthelezi, then influential in the conservative Inkatha Freedom Party, that “COSAS was the youth gone mad” (in Naidoo, 1990, p.132). Student protest is commonly posited as a kind of vigilante justice, and in this is associated with the trope of the savage.

Mob justice

In apartheid discourse, civil uprising was evidence of black savagery – a narrative that draws on the colonial discourse of African savagery. An example of this is some of the

³⁵ Although Magubane’s photograph reflects the trope of the savage mob, he is also associated with documenting the everyday under apartheid rule, and his representations of protest action and of black South Africans in general escape racist stereotyping (see e.g. Magubane, 1993).

news coverage of the 1986 Crossroads attack discussed briefly above. Despite the impression that witnesses had that police supported the attackers, the incident was widely represented as an incident of ‘black-on-black’ violence. While the incident was also covered in other more accurate ways, the excerpts from rightwing South African editorials are interesting not only in terms of how youth is associated with mob action (as discussed above) but also in terms of how the incident becomes an example of black savagery. In such representations disorder is described as inherent to townships simply because they are black residential neighbourhoods. By this argument, attempting to establish law and order is a lost cause in the face of the chaotic order of what is referred to as ‘the law of the jungle’.

The law of the jungle applies in the Crossroads, where a social organisation has taken root around a number of leaders who each controls his faction to some degree... Radicals, mostly youths, have through terrorism, intimidation, necklace murders and firearms established a culture of violence. They dictate boycotts, stay-away actions and keep the area in turmoil. (*Die Volksblad* 23 May 1986 in Phelan, 1987, p.205)

It is not only the association of blackness with savage order that is familiar from Brantlinger’s (1985) analysis of British colonial discourse, but also the implication in these reports that black South Africans need to be saved from themselves.

The police’s present role in Crossroads is to keep the quarrellers apart, but it should also be a lesson for people who maintain that peace and order will return automatically to the Black residential areas as soon as the police and army withdraw (*Beeld* 23 May 1986 in Phelan, 1987, p.204).

The violence of the uprising is framed both as a reaction to apartheid policy and as a *reason* for apartheid policy. Unlike colonial discourse where Africans are envisaged as properly engaged in an economy of rural subsistence, the violence is firmly contextualised in an industrial and urban economy of paid labour.

Now reaction has set in. Black people who want to be left in peace to earn their daily bread are using clubs, hatchets and arson to revolt against the “Comrades” or “Makabanas” as the young radicals are known. They refuse to continue living in fear that their families and property will be burnt out when they return from work, and they want to rid the area of radicals. They also do not welcome the presence of police in the area. (*Die Volksblad* 22 May 1986 in Phelan, 1987, p.205, my emphasis).

The disorder is not only understandable in terms of what is posited as savage ‘African nature’ but in terms of work. Although it is implicit that black predisposition to mob violence is genetic, the discourse of late apartheid made sense of civil uprising with reference to sociological factors: for example, poverty and unemployment.

A haphazard settlement of poverty-stricken people such as this is, of course, an obvious starting point for radicals who wish to kindle revolution. The inhabitants have little to lose, many are unemployed

and desperate. Law enforcement in such an area is very difficult. (*Die Volksblad* 22 May 1986 in Phelan, 1987, p.205)

There are a number of implications of presenting the uprising in this way. Firstly, signifying popular uprising as mass hysteria delegitimises the grounds for protest. Secondly, presenting popular revolt as racial legitimises apartheid's premise of white racial superiority. Thirdly, articulating civil uprising as part of a narrative of industrialisation presents it as part of modernising. This in turn constructs apartheid as a progressive (modern) ideology (I return to this point later in the chapter). Mass protest is understood in terms of factors relating to industrialisation (e.g. poverty and unemployment) *and* as in concordance with traditional African culture. In these two ways of understanding mass uprising its political motivations are ignored.

The idea of the savage mob and savage authority are conflated in representations of vigilante action³⁶. Apartheid television images evoked black people as barbaric with footage of 'chanting blacks setting cars on fire and beating people up' (p.47 in HRC, 1999). Articles on violent corporal punishment in South Africa draw from a broader context of articles on torture and violent punishment that conflate non-western practices of order and inhumane practices of order³⁷. The point in the article below, and others like it, is that these inhumane practices are not contrary to law and order, but sanctioned by the state.

Before handing [alleged criminals] over to the police, members [of the vigilante group Mapogo a Matamaga] mete out their own brand of "medicine" to the suspects to "cure them from their bad ways". Mapogo's "method" has got many of its members in trouble. More than 20 members of Mapogo... have been charged with attempted murder; there are also members who have been charged with murder. The cases are still pending; there have been no convictions yet. ('Vigilante group sweeps the suburbs' *Mail&Guardian* 21 January 2000, paras. 8-9)

So when South Africans are punished violently the context of articles on non-western punishment suggests to the reader that such violent punishment could be sanctioned by the new South African state.

[I]t is the tacit acceptance of this street justice on the part of the authorities that is as disturbing as the nature of the punishment they mete out. ('When the law is a sjambok'³⁸, *Mail&Guardian* 14 May 1999, par 4)

³⁶ See e.g. 'When the law is a sjambok' *Mail&Guardian* 14 May 1999, 'Vigilante group sweeps the suburbs' *Mail&Guardian* 21 January 2000.

³⁷ e.g. 'Pregnant [Nigerian] teen stoned for sex' *Mail&Guardian* 14 September 2000; 'Torture routine in Africa' *Business Day* 31 May 2001.

³⁸ A sjambok is a whip.

The location of South African torture and violent punishment in non-western practices belies the torture and violent punishment sanctioned by the apartheid and colonial states. It means a reinvestment in a geographical frontier, that savagery continues to be a point of reference in contemporary discursive practice. It also means an investment in the idea that what is non-western is also archaic. This idea of what I am terming a 'temporal frontier' is an integral aspect of apartheid discursive practice, and is embedded in its education policies.

The temporal frontier

In both colonial and apartheid discursive practices what I am terming a frontier is drawn between what are termed 'savage' and 'civilised' ways of being. The frontier is also one between tradition and modernity. 'Civilised' behaviour is also modern while 'savage' behaviour is also traditional. This frontier is a temporal one that separates the archaic from contemporary behaviour. The insistence on a frontier between traditional and modern ways relegates the traditional to the archaic. The temporal distinction continues to be powerful in how school disruption is represented in newspaper reports (see chapter four), in how corporal punishment is described in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* (see chapter three), and in how students represent their school (see chapter five).

Development and discipline

In the Victorian colonial discourse Brantlinger (1995) describes, African ways of being are understood as non-progressive and as less evolved: and so they are presented as irruptions of the past into the present. For example, where, under colonial rule, 'Europeans' were under 'modern' rule of law, 'natives' were under 'customary' law.

Apartheid's shift to raced discipline is described as modernising. For Roos, an influential South African penal reformer in the early 20th century, the penal reforms that resulted in industrial and reformatory schools meant stepping away from the limited space of a primitive and barbaric past into the freedom of the open air (Chisholm, 1989, p.93). His objective was

to teach the inmates [of industrial and reformatory schools] to acquire habits of discipline and habits of work, to teach them a love of industry and an aversion to idleness and indifference, to equip them with some useful trade or calling by which they can earn an honest livelihood, and to prepare them generally to be good and thrifty citizens. The discipline is that of the family, the school, the workshop, and the farm, not that of the prison. The pupils are to be watched over as pupils rather than as

criminals. The restraint shall be such as to develop good, and repress bad qualities. Self-instruction, self desire to labour and self-government shall be inculcated and encouraged as the best culture as well as the most effective discipline. (in Chisholm, 1989, p.98)

In shifting the state's objective regarding juvenile delinquents from punishment to rehabilitation, and in the definition of a 'pre-delinquent' or 'at-risk' state, South African industrial and reformatory schools adhere most precisely to what Foucault has described as post-Enlightenment social discourse. In Foucault's discussion a delinquent act merely brings a pre-existing delinquency to the attention of the authorities. For Foucault, delinquency enables order, and so order is reliant on it. Certainly, as the discussion in this chapter has shown, both colonial and apartheid social orders were reliant on the location of delinquency in the savage, and in the location of the savage in being black. In terms of the South African production of race, the association of blackness with delinquency that was punishable under apartheid law³⁹ meant that black people, as an 'open illegality' (Foucault, 1977, see the first chapter of this dissertation), summed up all the other delinquencies. The delinquency of being black legitimised apartheid rule. Criminality was not an action, but a state of being – a condition that is entirely in keeping with Foucault's description of delinquency as biographical.

For Escobar, who bases his (1995) study of development discourse on Foucault's approach, the modernist project of social development (that Foucault articulates in prison reform) is also more successful in creating a biography of (delinquent) need for development than in alleviating poverty. Escobar's discourse analysis of development 'as a historically single experience' locates development discourse as a response to the fall of the colonial empire, and the expansion of the capitalist system. The focus of development is poverty, but its effect is a continuation of Western domination of, for example, Latin America and Africa. In the discourses of economic development and modernisation the colonial tropes of savagery are sustained, and in the project to reform Third World peasants, lack of modernity is delinquent.

Development assumes a teleology to the extent that it proposes that the "natives" will sooner or later be reformed; at the same time, however, it reproduces endlessly the separation between reformers and

³⁹ One example among many is how the Urban (Bantu) Areas Act (1923) that regulated migrant labour, made it illegal for all but very few black people to live in cities. They were allowed to apply for permission to look for work in the cities and subsequently live there for eleven months out of the year. This 'privilege' would be conditional on their not being joined by their families. The criminalisation of ordinary actions like parents and children living together meant that the law was frequently broken. This justified constant policing (Mamdani, 1996, p.228). For example, the pass laws regulating black people's movement meant that an estimated seventeen and a half million black persons were prosecuted between 1916 and 1981 (Mamdani, 1996, p.228).

those to be reformed by keeping alive the premise of the Third World as different and inferior, as having a limited humanity in relation to the accomplished European. (p.11)

In this 'secular theory of salvation' (Nandy, 1987) development is a moral injunction. Similarly, modernising is phrased by South African penal reformers (such as Roos) as moral reform (Chisholm, 1989). The 'savage' lack of modernity is conflated with a lack of morality. So, for Roos, crime is uncivilised, and an impediment in the modernising of the South African nation. His equation of 'natives' with crime completes the discursive reasoning: crime equals a lack of modernity, which equals savagery, which equals being black.

Chisholm (1989) points out in her account of the history of reformatory and industrial schools in South Africa that juvenile delinquency has been defined and addressed in racial terms since the end of the 19th century. The development of institutions for delinquent and 'pre-delinquent' youth mirrored the development of South African social engineering that would culminate in apartheid. As such reformatory and industrial schools were important discursive spaces for the production of race as significant of deviancy. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, industrial and reformatory schools on the Witwatersrand⁴⁰ were formulated as a response to a number of factors; prominent among which was 'rehabilitating' poor urban white children from their easy contact with black children⁴¹. Reformatories were also reorganised to accommodate a distinction between 'coloured' and black youth. An important example of how race was produced as an effective distinction between people was that industrial and reformatory schools instituted different methods of control based on race and gender.

While a punishment and reward system according privileges in the form of power and food to good conduct boys apparently operated in all reformatories, it was developed to greater and lesser degrees in different institutions. African boys and all girls were virtually completely excluded from any such system. After 1926, white girls were increasingly incorporated into a system of reward which permitted greater opportunity for contact with the outside world; neither they, nor black boys, however, were given the right to 'self-government' in the institution. 'Coloured' boys also were excluded from this system; they were, however, given powers through food and the monitorial system over one another. (p.386)

Badroodien (2001, 2002) notes the construction of 'colouredness' in reformatory institutions like the Ottery School of Industries (established in 1948). Furthermore,

⁴⁰ The Witwatersrand is the location of the gold reef on which Johannesburg and its surrounding towns are built.

delinquency was defined in racial terms. For the Afrikaner nationalism of the late 1930s, delinquency was the result of racial contact (Chisholm, 1989). According to this thinking, a racially pure nation has no conflict. This idea is reflected in how the need for reformatories and industrial schools was located in the 'dangerous' effects of poor white children growing up with black children. The racial segregation of reformatories and industrial schools were ways in which the state defined whiteness. In 'rescuing' or 'reclaiming' white children from situations in which race was not an important social signifier, race was reinvented as more important than class. For the liberalism of the same period, delinquency was also a function of race, although here situated in the 'potentially explosive' consequences of a growing uncontrolled black proletariat (Chisholm, 1989). It is suggested that control was asserted through social rights to wages, housing and education, but racial desegregation was not suggested.

In Roos' zeal for fighting crime, reformatories became the first form of compulsory schooling for black children (Chisholm, 1989). For black children, state schooling and institutions addressing juvenile delinquency were to some extent conflated. Racist social policy was not simply masked by welfarist and humanitarian discursive practice, but was embedded in ideas of raced 'moral reform', 'work training', 'corrective residential care' and 'educative rehabilitation'. As Badroodien (2002) puts it, "[t]hese kinds of ideas and processes were therefore directly complicit in the very real blurring of the categories of 'correctional', educational and welfarist provision for the 'coloured' indigent population of South Africa..." (p.10). Embracing the modern mode of control that is discipline has, in South Africa, been associated with the project of ensuring white supremacy. The production of race that is embedded in how delinquency is defined and addressed is also embedded in the mode of control. As such, the disciplinary technologies of modern schooling (Foucault, 1977) discipline students to a raced identity.

Chisholm (1989) describes as separate the projects of controlling black and white children. Where for black children "the reformatory existed alongside the prison, as a form of control over movement and labour", for white children industrial schools and reformatories "existed alongside the school, for the re-allocation and re-socialisation of

⁴¹ Reformatory and industrial schools also relied heavily on gender distinctions, which, in their definition of 'natural' and 'unnatural' crimes and behaviours for boys and girls, produced gender identity (Chisholm, 1989).

the children of the urban unemployed” (1989, p.159). However, the two projects were the expression of a single development strategy towards modernisation. The fact that being white and poor was regulated in a different way to being black was integral to the modernist discursive practice, where being black was more deviant than being poor. In both practical and ideological terms, this way of understanding black schooling in South Africa can be extended to include colonial and apartheid education systems. Here black children were guaranteed an inferior education. The stated aim of colonial and Bantu Education was the correction in black people of Western influence. These and other state policies were to discipline black people to an inferior status. The policies were framed as ways of controlling unruly blackness. The first step in this project was to define race and to distinguish races from each other. Schools were instrumental in this process.

The fact that apartheid policies were described as modern reform, and were carried out using the precepts and the technologies of modern disciplinary control, is important to my study because of the frequent association in all the contemporary texts analysed here of modernisation and reform. ‘Development’ is typically associated with improved facilities, but is significant of a move away from savagery. The movement away from the savage is also articulated as a move away from the past, where the future is envisioned as ‘modern’. It is important to note that the formulation of the past as savage and the future as modern presents these states as synchronous. In other words, as in colonial and apartheid discursive practice, in contemporary discursive practice certain South Africans are understood as living in modern times *at the same time* as other South Africans are understood as living in the past. This temporal split is sometimes expressed as a rural/urban problematic.

Tradition and modernity

Mudimbe (1988) points out that the dichotomy of tradition and modernity is one of the binary oppositions that forms part of colonial discourse⁴². Apartheid extended the colonial order’s split reality where some were modern citizens and others were peasant subjects (Mamdani, 1996). Under apartheid it was possible to be a peasant subject within the modern city, located geographically in modernity, but inhabiting a peasant subject space. This tension is most apparent in the situation of migrant workers. In his

analysis of miner hostel-based violence on the Johannesburg reef in the early 1990s, Mamdani (1996) describes migrant workers as straddling rural and urban regimes. Migrant workers are the rural in the urban, 'peasant workers transported to an urban setting' to live and work separated from permanent township residents in rural enclaves in the city (Mamdani, 1996, 219). Expanding on this understanding, black South Africans in general were constructed under apartheid as out of time, out of place in modernity. Subject to laws that denied them the rights of modern citizenship, they were discursively positioned as subjects where white South Africans were positioned as citizens.

In both apartheid and colonial discursive practices African custom is reinvented as delinquent and also as archaic. Both sets of discursive practices attempted to enact a rupture of South African society that was as much temporal as it was racial. It would seem that some South Africans were, and, according to some contemporary accounts, are, living in a pre-modern time. However, this idea is misleading and belies the ways in which the two systems relied and rely on each other. Just as the idea of the savage can be understood as part of the idea of colonial order, so the savage can be understood as part of the idea of the modern. Modernity is defined against tribal or traditional societies. For Giddens (1994), modernity is associated with 'detraditionalisation' and, so, with a different mode of social interaction. As much as the modern can be understood in positive terms as a change in practice associated with changing conceptions of time, space and production (Fairclough & Chouliaraki, 1999), it can also therefore be understood simply as non-traditional. However, the tribal and the traditional are defined with reference to and in the service of a colonial discourse of order. Consequently the modern *and* the traditional are predicated on colonial understandings of the savage. This means that the savage, which is also the traditional, does not so much pre-date the modern, but is constantly re-invoked in order for modernity to be defined. This has three implications. Firstly, it means that the traditional is invoked as savage. Secondly, it means that the traditional is invoked as devoid of external influence, homogeneous and unchanging. Thirdly, the distinction between modernity and tradition is constructed as meaningful.

⁴² Others are, e.g., oral vs. printed and written texts, subsistence vs. highly productive economies; agrarian and customary communities vs. urban and industrialised civilisation (Mudimbe, 1988, p.4).

Tradition is invented in the modern, and is denied its complexity, heterogeneity and its existence in the present.

[C]ulture, or tradition, as it is often called, is seldom as compact and singular as it is made out be. Rather it is full of tension, diverse and differentiated... In contrast to those who see... culture as in the singular (say, "Zulu tradition"), I will emphasise the plurality and heterogeneity of tradition. I will argue that it is necessary to restore not only the element of historical dynamism in the understanding of culture, but also that of contemporary diversity and plurality. Put differently, tradition should not be understood as a cultural baggage carried through historical time. Rather, like notions of community..., those of culture are also reproduced through struggles that pit diverse and even contradictory notions against each other. (Mamdani, 1996, p.227)

Mamdani's analysis of the violent uprising of Johannesburg migrant workers in the 1990s is illustrative of the value of a more complex understanding of the relationship between modernity and tradition. The violence that erupted between migrant workers and township dwellers can be understood then neither as the result of political agendas, sociological factors, nor as the clash of tradition and modernity. Instead, encompassing all these explanations, the violence can be understood as developing out of a complex shift in how traditional authority was formulated, and as an expression of tradition-based revolt against apartheid.

Like tradition, modernity is invented in drawing a temporal frontier. In apartheid discursive practice modernity signifies, amongst others, an efficient separation of races. In contemporary accounts of school discipline modernity signifies sometimes a post-apartheid state of being that is located predominantly in the absence of apartheid. This is especially true of the policy document *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*. In the newspaper reports modernity features as a trope of Western sensibility, and so in a way that is extremely coherent with the way in which modernity signifies in apartheid (and colonial) discursive practice. However in all these accounts modernity signifies development, an evolution. In all these accounts modernity is a state achieved by looking outwards towards 'more developed' countries who are more developed, specifically, not so much because of 'physical' attributes such as technological advances, but because they are further ahead in time.

The distinction between modernity and savagery powers a contemporary South African meta-narrative that is a continuous statement of belief in the secular salvation of modernisation (see chapter three), and that continues to explain behaviour as raced (see chapter four). The discipline of the authoritarian classroom is also the discipline of the

colonial gaze, which is also the discipline of modernity. Authoritarian practices continue to produce race and to produce blackness as delinquent in schools, but also continue to produce the school discursive space as one where 'underdevelopment' is staved off. This is most apparent in the continued discursive reliance on the idea of despotic African authority and the idea of the savage mob in ways of understanding school order and disorder. In this schools continue to be produced as frontiers between modernity and savagery.

3. THE SALVATION OF THE MODERN: *ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT*

On the occasion of the recent launch of the policy document *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* (2001) by the Department of Education after the abolition of corporal punishment in South African schools, the minister of education, Kader Asmal, had the following to say:

I have great pleasure in presenting to you today this guide for teachers on alternatives to corporal punishment. It is a resource that will surely make a contribution to the democratic, human rights culture in our society, and therefore one which we must welcome. In line with international trends, we have outlawed the beating and slapping of young children, as well as any other form of psychological or emotional abuse. Such acts are contraventions of the basic rights to dignity and security, and cannot be allowed. I am therefore especially pleased to be launching this material so soon after the highest Court has ruled that our banning of corporal punishment is indeed consistent with the Constitution.

Despite its prohibition, we are aware of continuing cases of corporal punishment which are brought to our attention, or reported in the media. We have to be firm and in some cases we have requested that charges be laid against the educator concerned. But we also have a responsibility to assist teachers to manage without the cane, which for many teachers over many years has been the only way of administering discipline in schools. Fear of being hit might induce a learner to sit still and be quiet for a while, but it cannot be a basis for effective learning. And we do not want a cowering child to emerge from our schools; we want confident, affirmed youths, ready to take on the world. ... In the book teachers are taken through the difference between discipline – that is, the conscious ordering of learning – and punishment, which is used only when discipline is not established or breaks down. Much of the text is about taking pro-active steps to ensure order, such as developing a Code of Conduct and establishing levels of misconduct and related appropriate punishments...

It is not only corporal punishment that is to be eliminated but also all practices that involve humiliation, abusive language, bullying, punitive measures or exclusion. What is envisaged is the implementation of a disciplinary code, which is positive, constructive and corrective. Discipline is ultimately about learners developing a sense of responsibility for their own behaviour, respect for the rights of others and self-control...

In considering the suggestions contained in this booklet, think about the kind of society we want, and the kind of citizens we want. Remember what we have fought for, and what pains this nation has suffered at the hands of brutal oppressors. Let us not recreate that society in our schools, by making them places of fear. And let us not contribute to a world in which violence is the perceived solution to any problem.

The preface articulates the transition from apartheid to democracy as the movement towards modernity, as joining the world not so much in geographical but temporal

terms. In the previous chapters I have discussed the shifting nature of ‘modernity’ in South African discursive practice, and linked it to the production of race. Here, however, it is linked to the cessation of brutality, to the reclamation of human dignity denied by the state before 1994. Is the sign ‘modernity’ open to reinterpretation like this, or is it so firmly attached to the (raced) idea of savagery that one cannot have one without the other? Bhabha (1994) argues that, in order to escape the colonial, modernity, or, rather, modernities must be re-articulated from postcolonial perspectives: as ‘the disjunctive space’ that is Fanon’s ‘vision of contradiction and cultural difference’ (p.238). While *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment (ACP)*¹ does not achieve the ‘nonmodern’ (Escobar, 1995) that is an assertion of cultural difference inimical to binary oppositions of past and present, it does claim a position between the (savage) apartheid past and the (national) modern future, and so, perhaps, speaks from Mudimbe’s (1988) intermediary space. In this chapter I will briefly discuss the ways in which the content of ACP breaks new ground, and then how the project continues to be haunted by the figure of the savage. Finally I will assess the extent to which ACP is what Fairclough (1995) terms a ‘creative’ text, in which a new cultural discourse is broached. First I will discuss my methodology.

Methodology

I have discussed my selection of this text and its analysis in the introduction, but will expand here on these choices.

Sample

ACP is a significant instance of what Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) describe as ‘discursive practice’. It was published shortly after the Constitutional Court ruling that the universal abolition of corporal punishment in schools (South African Schools Act, 1996) is not an infringement of the constitutional right to religious freedom. Given the

¹ The 35 pages of ACP are divided into three sections. The state’s argument against corporal punishment is presented in the first part. In the second part, discipline and punishment are discussed with respect to teachers’ concerns. This section offers the teacher an opportunity to explore his or her own attitudes towards classroom control. In the third section, the school code of conduct is discussed. Here the legal requirements for a code of conduct are presented, as well as a model for such a code of conduct, a list of possible offences and suggestions as to how these should be dealt with. Finally, this section contains a model process for a school to follow in drawing up its own code of conduct. These sections are preceded by a preface by minister of education, Kader Asmal and an introduction that summarises the document. This document is obliquely addressed to teachers who are or who have in

importance of school discursive practice for South African discursive practice in general, ACP would be significant enough only in how it addresses apartheid's authoritarian pedagogy. However, ACP is also articulated into a context of a media concern regarding school disruption that is related to a growing and sometimes hysterical concern, also expressed in the media, with rising crime (see chapter four). The concern with school disruption is expressed in a racist narrative where teachers and students display their savagery.

Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) distinguish between the production of meaning through activity and through representation, but link these as parts of semiotic elements of social practice. ACP is an unusual document in that, as policy, it comes closer to 'activity' than to 'representation'. However, it is nevertheless a hugely significant instance of semiotic social practice.

Analysis

My analysis of ACP focuses on how teachers and students are represented, as well as on the implications of the transgression of the policy genre.

ACP is ambiguous in its presentation of order and discipline. For example, while the Department of Education (DOE) states its intent to move away from authoritarianism, in many ways the document sustains an authoritarian attitude towards teachers. A significant section of the policy is framed in a self-help style that sits somewhat uneasily with the political dogma of the first chapter. These textual 'discontinuities' reveal important shifts in the account of South African discipline. For policy analysts Ball (1990) such 'failures' of policy texts are important for analysis. The 'discontinuities, compromises, omissions and exceptions' are textual markers of the unwieldy nature of formulating policy – that 'capture the messy realities of influence, pressure, dogma, expediency, conflict, compromise, intransigence, resistance, error, opposition and pragmatism in the policy process' (p.9). Ball cautions against reading policy as a resolved account of consensus by smoothing over the textual discontinuities. For Fairclough (2001), textual discontinuity, a text's hybridity, should precisely be the focus of analysis since it is evidence of meaningful genre shifts.

the past used corporal punishment. It sets out to convince them not only that there *are* alternatives to

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) techniques are particularly useful in the discussion of a text's hybridity (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Instead of analysing a hybrid text where two genres are present as two parts, in CDA the hybrid text's ambiguity is the focus of the analysis. Ambiguity and contradiction in relation to genre are instances of interaction, and, so, are data. Here genre is understood as a way of regulating and ordering discourse. If genre is understood as a form of regulation and control, shifts in genre, and combinations of genres, are instances of resistance, in terms of discursive practice to systems.

Affirming dignity

A new economy, one of respect, must be forged to replace the economy of terror that ruled before. It is, as Asmal points out, crucial. I will return later in the chapter to the ways in which the designation of the apartheid era as savage and the democratic era as modern are problematic. The point I want to make here is that this document is highly unusual in the history of South African education policy.

ACP proposes major changes in the role of the teacher, and the interaction between students and teachers. It does not impose a single model of classroom control; instead it offers teachers a number of examples. Teachers² may choose from models of classroom management entitled the 'Democrat', the 'Community Builder', the 'Behaviourist' and the 'Empathiser' (pp.15-19). If the teacher follows the 'Democratic' disciplinary model, he or she is responsible for developing a 'social and moral constitution' with the students. The disciplinary strategies derive from

corporal punishment, but that these are preferable for a number of reasons.

² The term 'educator' and teacher responsibilities were recently redefined in the South African Schools Act (1996). Here 'educator' is defined as

any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at any public school, further education and training institution, departmental office or adult basic education centre and who is appointed in a post on any educator establishment under this Act. (p.3).

This broad and neutral definition allows for a more inclusive understanding of the person it describes. It is also perhaps an escape from the pejorative connotations of 'teacher' – the association of teachers with apartheid authorities being but one of these. In describing apartheid teacher cultures, both Chisholm (1999) and Constat (1997) convey an impression of a working environment that necessitated teachers choosing between very polarised political positions. These choices determined their professional identity. Chisholm notes that even defining oneself as a professional was politically meaningful since it was associated with working within the apartheid state system (whereas defining oneself as a worker was to be in opposition to the state) (p.123). To be perceived as working with the state was uncomfortable in many ways, not least of which was vilification by, for instance, students who were politically active against the state.

establishing how the student's misconduct adversely affects the classroom and school community. Here the teacher is expected to

Think beyond discipline to the issues that impact on the building of a community.

Take a holistic approach to create a classroom based on commitment, respect, care and dignity.

Believe that through this process, discipline as something outside of the learner will be replaced by self-discipline (p.16).

In the 'Community Builder' model, the emphasis is on discussion rather than creating a working document that sets out acceptable behavioural paradigms. The teacher is responsible for initiating and facilitating discussions. He or she is expected to be 'authentic and unpatronising' and should be skilled at conflict resolution. In the 'Behaviourist' model, the teacher is expected to provide

Clear and consistent rules and expectations

Clear and consistent consequences

Thoughtful and strategic positive reinforcement; and

The modelling of good behaviour (p.17).

Finally, in the 'Empathiser' model, the emphasis is on understanding a student's behaviour within its specific context.

[An] educator must be increasingly curious about the behaviour, personality and life circumstances of each child (p.19).

This section concludes by saying that teachers are *not* expected to be psychologists, they are expected to be "in touch" with learners' behavioural problems and "to understand the nature of the problem and to be able to identify appropriate help" (p.19). One of the criticisms I have of this document is that it places all the responsibility for changing classroom culture on teachers. In keeping with this criticism, it should be noted that the simplicity of these models belies a certain level of facilitating, negotiating and psychological expertise that teachers cannot be assumed to have. There is no reference in the document to school conditions that may impact negatively on classroom management: such as, for instance, large classes (some teachers regularly have classes of 70 students), and community problems such as a high level of gangsterism. However, there is an emphasis here, and throughout the document, on promoting students' self-respect and dignity, and on modelling non-confrontational and participative modes of interaction. Students' rights are emphasised in every section – perhaps most notably in the last section where the code of conduct is discussed. For instance,

Every learner has the right
to be treated fairly...
to be treated with respect by the school community regardless of personal, cultural, racial or other
differences... (p.22)

The student envisaged in ACP is assertive and empowered. There is a great deal of emphasis on understanding the student's actions in the context of personal or family problems, which supports a holistic attitude to classroom and community relations. Although in most of the document there is a tendency to dichotomise student behaviour, in the last section a continuum of levels of behaviour is presented that somewhat counteracts the good learner/ bad learner effect created earlier.

In the last section of the document models a code of conduct and for the procedure in devising and implementing a disciplinary policy are provided. The reader is informed of the legal procedure for the serious offences of suspending or expelling a student. In addition, there is a list that details levels of misconduct with examples of delinquent behaviour. The last section may be criticised for being densely written, and so perhaps not accessible to a number of teachers, it is nevertheless clearly laid out, informative and thorough.

Most importantly, however, ACP does not present a raced punishment schemata. This is the first state document since the inception of compulsory schooling that does not propose a raced delinquency, or a different system of punishment for children of different races. Nor is race coded into the way students are described.

The presentation of the context of the proposed change accords teachers with dignity. For instance, the proposed change is carefully contextualised in terms of the recent Constitutional Court decision supporting the abolition of corporal punishment in schools (p.6). It is pointed out that the two major teachers' unions (SADTU and NAPTOSA) support the proposed change. The responsibility the DOE has to international bodies with whom it has signed treaties in support of banning child abuse is also outlined. However, the most important, and most powerful, contextualisation is the discussion of the relationship between corporal punishment

and apartheid. Caning is linked to Christian National Education and to the ideological project of fostering the unquestioning acceptance of authority (p.5)³.

Corporal punishment was part of a bigger picture of an authoritarian approach to managing the school environment which was based on the view that children need to be controlled by adults and that measures such as sarcasm, shouting and other abusive forms of behaviour were ways of teaching children a lesson, or ensuring that they were so afraid that they never stepped out of line. (p.9)

This is similar to the significance of corporal punishment in the newspaper representations analysed in chapter four. The abolition of corporal punishment, in contrast, is linked to the resistance to apartheid and the advent of democracy (p.5).

After 1994, when South Africa stepped out of isolation and adopted a new democratic constitution guaranteeing the right to dignity, equality, freedom and security for all citizens, we followed the path of most other democracies by passing legislation to outlaw corporal punishment (p.5).

Unlike the newspaper representations, the authoritarian practices of apartheid classrooms are contextualised in the apartheid state's policy of human rights abuse. There is an acknowledgement here that authoritarian classrooms were a systemic feature of apartheid.

However, presenting a before-and-after scenario, where South Africans step from the darkness of apartheid into the light of modernity, is deceptive. It is deceptive, firstly, because it belies the fluidity of discursive practice. A before-and-after scenario posits a separation between now and then that does not describe the ways in which apartheid practices were resisted before 1994, nor does it describe the ways in which apartheid practices are continued now. The conversion scenario promises an abrupt change in institutional culture that is unrealistic – although certainly necessary, and in some schools already in progress.

Secondly, the promise of modernity is conceptually deceptive. The 'modernising' – which in this case promised greater economic stability for working classes – of post-second world war British educational reforms sustained class divisions, reproducing them, rather than, as was promised, making the benefits of education available to all (Hall, 1977). The promise of modernisation in developing countries' education systems is often an empty promise of greater access to economic rights that, in effect, means increased bureaucracy and some new, clean school buildings (Fuller, 1991).

³ Since I will be referring extensively to ACP I will use only page numbers.

Both apartheid and colonial states made claims to be modernising that enabled them to enact white supremacy. As argued in chapter two, South African modernising has taken the form of authoritarianism, racial segregation and the construction of blackness as delinquent. The school has effected the production of race at the same time as it effected the 'reformation' of black South Africans (Chisholm, 1989). Even where modernising has not taken the form of racial segregation, it has been associated with centralised control and with social development policies that cement unequal relations between developed and developing nations (Escobar, 1995). The apartheid state is of course irretractably associated with the denial of human rights and with the kind of barbaric torture and humiliation of the human body that recalls the very worst practices of medieval Europe or of Nazi Germany. In ACP the fall of the apartheid state signals the arrival of the modern age in South Africa, our own enlightenment, at last. This modern age is the age of democracy, of the human rights culture that South Africa is claiming access to, membership of. I have established in the previous chapter that in contemporary South African discursive practice 'modernisation' is to a great extent an empty signifier of change, and, more specifically, a signifier of the transition to democracy without sustained reference to political point of view or mode of control. Consequently, modernity could arguably stand for the rejection of apartheid norms as much as it once stood for an assertion of white supremacy. However, looking at how teachers are represented in ACP reveals that despite the genuine shifts discussed above the document continues to refer in its definition of modernity to the idea of savagery. While describing the apartheid era as savage, as pre-modern, may express the horror we feel at the brutalities perpetrated, this description continues to rely on the colonial fantasy of a binary opposition of savagery and civilisation.

Modernising teachers

In ACP teachers are the targets of reform. In this they become the signs of an irruption of savagery, and to be saved they must submit to a confession of their unruly natures. Teachers are represented as occupying roles or identities situated within a binary opposition of good and bad, in terms of how they treat students. Therefore, despite the care taken to lay out a plausible path leading away from corporal punishment, those at the one end of that path, those who are using corporal punishment, are defined as bad teachers in every sense. In this there is a clear

reiteration of the trope of the savage teacher that was also articulated in the news reports analysed in chapter four. Both of these representations of teachers recall the colonial idea of depraved African authority discussed in chapter two. The powerful association between shame and punishment that is made in the news reports is also evident here in how teachers are presented as shameful in how they control students.

In the previous chapter I discussed how teachers are established in media discourse as to blame for school dysfunction. Ball (1990) describes a similar situation in Britain in the 1970s where teachers were described as unruly, and blamed for what was perceived to be a decline in academic standards and a lack of discipline. The narrative of blame that was constructed was part of a profound shift to the right in dominant discursive practice – to Thatcherism, a move that speaks more of specific economic conditions than conditions in schools. Ensuing education policy reforms were more an expression of an ideological shift than a response to a sudden rash of teacher inadequacy. The powerful narratives of blame that were described in the previous chapter and are reiterated here should be understood similarly as a deflection of a profound ideological shift – away from a brutal, racist, authoritarian system to one that promises egalitarianism, transparency and accountability. In the media accounts of teachers' culpability attention is shifted from the systemic nature of the decay in black schools, and the systemic nature of the corruption of authority in all schools. Through ACP's insistence on corporal punishment as a signifier of apartheid savagery, the systemic nature of apartheid authoritarianism is acknowledged. However, in making teachers solely responsible for the paradigm shift in schools there is another disavowal of the systemic nature of the discursive practice of control that is to be changed. Although in ACP the state acknowledges that teachers are being required to make an ideological shift, the shift is justified as a moral necessity.

What is proposed in this document is that teachers be modernised. In contemporary media discourse teachers are associated with the trope of savage depravity that is a fairly direct reiteration of colonial discourse. In colonial discourse the cure for savagery was conversion to Christianity (Mudimbe, 1988); in the modernist project the discourse is not one of religious conversion but of development. While the representation of teachers in ACP is part of the production of teachers as delinquent, like the newspaper representations, it is at some remove from the raced delinquency

represented in the newspapers analysed in the previous chapter. I argue that race is replaced in ACP by apartheid savagery, so that what is delinquent is being associated with apartheid practices. Despite this very significant shift, the representation of teachers in ACP contains traces of the raced delinquency invoked in the contemporary newspaper representations and in colonial and apartheid discursive practices.

The various representations of teachers in ACP – which I have broadly categorised as ‘struggling’, ‘inefficient but well-intentioned’, or ‘good’ – form part of a cogent discourse that sets out to convert teachers from the savagery of corporal punishment to modern classroom management. These representations of teachers represent moments on the path to conversion and as the text builds up to the climax of the good teacher, those moments pass where adherence to corporal punishment could be excused through inefficiency or poor working conditions. The movement away from a transitional period in which lapses back into corporal punishment might be excused coincides with the solidification of an implicit image of a ‘bad’ teacher who regresses further and further beyond the pale during the course of the development of the state’s thesis.

The struggling teacher

There is at the outset the assumption that the teacher reading this document needs to develop disciplinary alternatives to corporal punishment:

This booklet attempts to help you, the educator, to find more constructive ways of building a culture of discipline among learners... (p.4).

ACP appeals to educators by recognising that they may face very difficult working conditions. This idea – that corporal punishment may be excused by the extreme nature of students’ misbehaviour – is also evidenced in the report discussing the MEC for Education in the KwaZulu-Natal province, Eileen kaNkosi Shandu’s controversial statement that corporal punishment should be reinstated, and her famous encouragement of her child’s school principal to “klap” (hit) him.

Most people agree – in principle – that corporal punishment is a barbaric practice that should be outlawed. The reality is that many teachers, already grappling with discipline problems in their classrooms, are being overrun by unruly pupils – or are they simply ignoring the law and administering “cuts” as usual. And who can blame them when no one has bothered to give them any training on alternative discipline measures? (‘The widening chasm between policy and reality’ *Mail&Guardian*, 8 May 1999)

This popular opinion is alluded to elsewhere:

Vally said that without training on alternatives to corporal punishment and the instilling of self-discipline, teachers would continue the traditional and quick-fix solutions of fear and pain to resolve problems. ('Court to decide whether schools should spare rod' *Business Day*, 2000) par15)

At the beginning of this narrative of how authority should be negotiated in the classroom, the intended audience – “Dear Educator” – is drawn in by the articulation of the undeniably difficult working conditions most teachers face. This approach is exemplified in Minister Asmal’s preface:

The reality of the situation is that many educators face daily struggles in their school environment with issues of discipline (p.1).

The first representation of teachers is one of a struggling teacher. This representation, one which articulates a bond of understanding between the state and the (probably errant) teacher reading this booklet, is maintained at the beginning of each section.

‘Section three: Disciplinary methods and procedures’ opens by reiterating the idealised school environment – one where disciplinary methods are scarcely necessary – illustrated in section two. Here, again, the struggling teacher is invoked and assured that his or her needs are being taken cognisance of:

However when a learner misbehaves or is guilty of misconduct disciplinary steps do have to be taken (p.20).

‘2. ACP in the Classroom’ opens with a reaffirmation of teachers as struggling and in need of help:

Many teachers have to deal with disruptive learners;

Corporal punishment has been part of the history of many learners and teachers;

Change is in itself a difficult process and;

That discipline is a recognised area of struggle for many teachers. (p.9)

The state addresses the teacher here, saying: “You might be doing this because you find change hard or you might be doing this because you don’t know any better. And this is fine because discipline *is* complicated.” This significant section (to which I will return further in the chapter) contains a table of good and bad behaviours as well as a list of model behaviours to be worked through by the teacher. Its significance lies in its very explicit presentation not only of the ideal and idealised (modern) teacher but also of his or her antithesis: the bad (savage) teacher.

Teachers follow a path through possible identities that leads them to being ‘good’ (modern) teachers. The first step is identifying themselves as struggling. This does not

require any admission of guilt because struggling is the result of an interaction between oneself and one's environment. In other words, struggling could as easily be the fault of the state in not providing teachers with adequate resources (as certainly is the case⁴) as one's own fault. In the next step, however, teachers need to identify the fault as located in themselves. Presenting teachers as well-intentioned mitigates this admission of guilt.

The inefficient but well-intentioned teacher

There is a sense in reading this document that a friendly hand is being extended to those teachers who believe in corporal punishment. The narrative offers a number of reasons why teachers might resort to hurting or humiliating students physically or emotionally. These are mostly found in '1. 5 Some common arguments against the banning of corporal punishment'. The arguments centre on two premises: firstly, on the teacher's desire for order in the school, and secondly on a deficit on the teacher's part. The following three examples speak to a desire for order that addresses a widely acknowledged – and sympathetic – need for a culture of learning and teaching.

The banning of corporal punishment has led to a deterioration in the behaviour of learners and bringing back the cane is the only way of restoring a culture of learning (p.7).

Children will neither show them respect nor develop the discipline to work hard unless they are beaten or threatened with being beaten (p.6).

Non-violent approaches to discipline will not have any effect on hooligan learners, particularly when there is gangsterism and violence in the school (p.7).

It follows from the good intentions presented in the examples above that one reason offered as to why teachers might use corporal punishment is that they may simply not know better.

Since they themselves experienced no harmful effects from having been beaten as children, there is no reason why they should not use it too (p.7).

There are also those educators who believe that corporal punishment is wrong, but they don't always know what to use instead of physical force or the threat of it (p.9).

⁴ Drawing on analyses of DOE expenditure on learning materials, Vinjevoold (1999) notes that schools are not receiving the materials they need (p.164). Teachers are found to have poor conceptual knowledge of the subjects they teach, which not only impacts on students' quality of knowledge but on classroom practice (Vinjevoold & Taylor, 1999, p.232). Vinjevoold and Taylor (1999) suggest that quality assurance mechanisms should be established at schools, that educators' knowledge foundations should be built up through pre- and in-service training. Such training is also essential to improve teachers' competence in teaching in English (the language of choice for most students and teachers) (p.234).

This is also a sympathetic representation of teacher's motivations. Although it locates the use of corporal punishment in the teacher's lack of knowledge, this representation of teachers as ignorant is mitigated by the representation of their good intentions. However, this sympathetic representation is not sustained throughout the text. In the following example no good intentions are attributed to teachers:

Corporal punishment is often quick and easy. Other methods require the time, patience and skill that educators often lack (p.7).

The implication above that teachers use corporal punishment because they are lazy is made more explicit later when corporal punishment is described as "an excuse for teachers not to find more constructive approaches to discipline in the classroom and therefore reinforces bad or lazy teaching practices" (p.8).

When we consider this presentation of teachers where their lack of skill is associated with lack of good intention, the sympathetic depiction of teachers as bravely struggling with challenging classes no longer seems so sympathetic. Although it acknowledges the problems teachers may be facing in their classrooms, considering the depiction of teachers as struggling in the light of depictions of teachers as unskilled reveals the implication that their struggles are the results of their own deficiencies.

Both the first and second step towards identifying with the 'good' (modern) teacher involve teacher representations that are not fixed in terms of right and wrong. The struggling teacher is not good or bad in terms of character because he or she struggles. Nor is the inefficient teacher beyond the pale, since he or she is, after all, well intentioned. However, the next step in the process set up in ACP involves polarising right and wrong and accepting that teachers may be characterised as either good (modern) or bad (savage). In the next section there is a shift from focusing on good and bad *practices*, to focusing on good and bad *people*.

Good teacher/ bad teacher

The process of excluding teachers who use corporal punishment from the realm of reasonable discourse is intensified in the rest of 'Section 2 Alternatives to corporal punishment in the Classroom'. This section contains two very significant textualisations of teachers. The first is a page-and-a-half table of self-exploratory

questions that encourage the teacher to explore his or her behaviour in the classroom (pp.10-12)⁵. The second is a four-page presentation of models of good disciplinary styles: namely 'The Democrat', 'the Community Builder', 'the Behaviourist' and 'the Empathiser' (pp.14-18). What is interesting here is how in the movement between the table and the models the errant behaviours that have been articulated somewhat sympathetically become increasingly beyond the pale, until they are excluded altogether from the acceptable possibilities presented in the models.

There is a fundamental contradiction in the introduction to the table and in its actual tone and content. It is introduced as a tool for self-exploration that will allow teachers to fine-tune their understanding of their own teaching practice. There is the suggestion that the reader will recognise and take responsibility for both constructive and destructive behaviours. However, the division of the table into 'negative' and 'positive' behaviours means that this suggestion is an unfounded one. The reader does not find him or herself on both sides of the table. Behaviours are explicitly presented as either *good* or as *bad* – and, so, in terms of the dichotomy of apartheid savagery and democratic modernity, as savage or modern. The abrupt change from the reader being addressed as 'you' to teachers being referred to in the third person further negates any self-exploration. The use of the third person encourages the reader to consider his or her own actions from a disassociated outside position – a position that is not conducive to honest self-*exploration* but rather to self-*judgement*. Given that the consequences of finding oneself guilty of corporal punishment not only place one outside of the law, but outside of newly defined societal norms, there is a strong inclination to locate oneself in the positive column.

The teachers described in the table are so very different that it is unlikely that one would be able to recognise one's own actions in *both* - even if it *was* perfectly safe to find one's actions in the negative column. The teacher described in the negative column is critical, reprimanding, punishing, controlling, negative, disrespectful, sarcastic, threatening, fearsome and bribing. He or she catches students out, wants to control students, beats, humiliates, shows power. He or she is inappropriate and

⁵ It is unfortunate that the web-based version of ACP has labelled the negative side of the table as 'corrective, constructive methods', and the positive side of the table 'punitive, destructive methods'. There are however more profound criticisms to be made here.

‘unempathetic’, does not take students’ needs and circumstances into account, and is prepared to isolate and banish students. He or she punishes bad behaviour, attempts to control students’ behaviour; tells students what to do. The good teacher, on the other side of the table, is an extremely controlled, empathetic individual. He or she presents students with positive alternatives, focuses on positive behaviour, rewards students for effort as well as good behaviour; is respectful, understanding, dignified, physically and verbally non-violent; relates consequences of breaking rules directly to student’s behaviour. This teacher is a very skilled negotiator. According to the table, he or she has discussed and agreed on rules with students, agrees on terms with student regarding time out, recognises that children have an innate sense of self-discipline and can be self-directed. He or she redirects behaviour by selectively ignoring misbehaviour using reflection on an incident through give-and-take discussions, regards mistakes as learning opportunities, focuses on behaviours not students.

Finally, having admitted first that they are struggling, secondly that they are inefficient (although well-meaning), and then that they may be characterised as either good or bad, teachers are encouraged to accept primary responsibility for changing the institutional culture of their schools. Their reading of themselves as good (modern) teachers is conditional on their accepting responsibility for change, since the ‘good’ teacher is by definition responsible. This is highly problematic as it obscures the roles of other stakeholders in the process, not least of whom is the state itself. It is also problematic because teachers may in all probability not have the necessary resources to institute such changes, and would certainly require extremely active support from students, parents and the state to do so. Allocating the responsibility of changing a disciplinarian school culture to teachers may be a response to some researchers’ findings that teachers, along with students and parents, place the blame for their problems on forces outside of their control, and look to outside intervention for solutions (Ewing & Setsubi, Gilmour in Vinjevold & Taylor, 1999, 138).

However, making change predominantly teachers’ responsibility obscures the school community’s role in maintaining a disciplinarian culture. This community includes the students, parents, school management and the state. The overwhelming nature of this responsibility, ultimately, for South African democracy notwithstanding, research on South African schools and teachers indicates that teachers simply do not have the resources to handle this responsibility. The legacy of colonial and apartheid schooling

continues to be apparent in under-qualified teachers, poorly resourced schools, a tradition of disrupted schooling and an unstable school environment. It appears from recent research that the majority of teachers are under-qualified for their teaching responsibilities both in terms of conceptual knowledge (Pile & Smyth, Reeves & Long, Webb et al in Vinjevold & Taylor, 1999) and in terms of pedagogical practice (Pile & Smyth, Dachs, Setati, Webb et al, Reeves & Long, Jita, Schollar, Duncan, Maja in Vinjevold & Taylor, 1999). In addition to the burden of often working without material or conceptual resources, the instability of the school environment should be taken into account. Until recently sites for popular revolt against the apartheid state, large numbers of schools are still sometimes sites for student riots. It is also likely that in many schools the school calendar is hugely disrupted. Schollar (in Vinjevold & Taylor, 1999, 136) found that in one region in one year on average 170 out of 191 possible tuition days were lost to institutional practices (such as registration, pay-days, district and regional meetings, examination preparation, writing and marking), union activities (such as strikes and meetings), extracurricular school activities (such as athletics, music competitions) and private activities (such as memorial services). It is likely that extremely high student mobility levels (Guzula & Hoadley in Vinjevold & Taylor, 1999, p.137) accompany such disruption. The success of enabling a democratic South African culture is severely compromised by allocating primary responsibility for changing a disciplinarian school culture to teachers. This narrative is enabled in the first place by the idea the possibility in the bad (savage) teacher that what are really systemic problems can be blamed on the teacher. The attitude that teachers have the power to ruin or transform the school is perhaps also reflected in the representation of Grace Letsedi in *Yizo Yizo* (Markgraaf, 2001), the new principal who comes into the school to transform it. However, part of Grace's appeal is her brave consultation of all community stakeholders. If the gangster figure of Papa Action can be seen to be emblematic of what is wrong at Supetsela High, then the community is shown to be just as culpable in his reign, and just as instrumental in his downfall as Grace Letsedi is.

ACP is addressed to teachers who believe in corporal punishment disciplinary methods. Since what is proposed in this document is not so much a behavioural change as a change in educational philosophy, even the simpler of the practical changes suggested in '2.4 Keeping Discipline going in your Class' signal a significant

adjustment⁶. The complexity of the change being required of teachers is further denied by the simplicity of the suggested response to the complicated issues raised in the models: ticking a box indicating whether you ‘sometimes’, ‘always’ or ‘never’ use this approach (pp.14-18). A more meaningful degree of self-reflection would entail recording and reflecting on examples from one’s own teaching experiences of instances in which each approach has been used.

Confession

Teachers are being required to convert from an authoritarian schooling philosophy to a humanitarian one. A choice is set up in this document between modern and savage behaviour, between being a good or a bad teacher. Although in the earlier sections trouble is taken to present ‘both sides’ of the ‘dilemma’, it becomes clear in section two that the dilemma is really whether teachers will stay on the wrong or the right side of time itself. At this point speaking to the errant teacher who uses corporal punishment takes on the quality of a refrain and is only apparent at the very beginning of section three. The assumption is clearly that the teacher undergoes a process of conversion during the reading of this document. This process of conversion is encouraged first by setting up a dichotomy of good teachers and bad teachers, in the process defining an ‘in-group’ and an ‘out-group’. The reader is then taken through a process of rejection of that out-group. This process of rejection is especially clear in the introduction to section two where teachers who use corporal punishment are assured that they are not alone in this practice – but that they soon *will* be.

If you have once used corporal punishment as a means of discipline, you are not alone; many teachers have only put away their canes and wooden spoons since the introduction of the new legislation (p.1).

The message is clear: ‘you’ can still be regarded sympathetically now because the legislation is new, but soon ‘you’ could be facing outcast status. That outcast status is hinted at in the next few lines:

⁶ Ackers and Hardman (2001) and Mintrop (1996) discuss similar demands being made on teachers in, respectively, the Kenyan and unified German contexts. They note that teachers find classroom management changes especially challenging. Mintrop notes that the German process of changing East German educational models was carried out in a ‘top-down fashion’ (p.362). Ackers and Hardman found that more participative educational models could not expect to be successful unless disciplinarian classrooms become more participative (p.259).

Many of them have found or are exploring viable alternatives, while others have unfortunately reverted to other forms of control through fear and humiliation such as sarcasm, making learners do degrading things like wearing their underwear on their heads... (p.10).

While the teacher in the first example uses methods of corporal punishment that are standardised and normalised both in everyday practice and in the previous legislation, the teachers in the second sentence use methods that refer obliquely to paedophilia. This picks up on the image of the sexually inappropriate teacher that is familiar from news accounts. Although news accounts focus more on teachers' inappropriate sexual behaviour with other adults, there is also considerable reporting on the sexual abuse and rape of students by teachers.

The teacher is encouraged to admit their guilt, to confess to their deficiency.

Do you or have you ever used corporal punishment? Under what circumstances?

Do you recognise why the change in focus from corporal punishment to alternatives is important?

Are you willing to put in the extra energy and effort to make these changes?

How will you deal with those days when nothing seems to work? (p.10).

These questions come just when the reader might reasonably expect some discussion of actual alternatives to corporal punishment. Instead of following the discussion of the abolition of corporal punishment, the global support for this move, and the definition of 'discipline' and 'punishment' with questions teachers might put to the department – such as “how will I achieve the changes necessary?” or “what if parents do not support the change?” – the teacher is asked to confess to being dysfunctional.

In being structured as an exercise in self-discovery that leads to dramatic behavioural change, ACP draws on the discourse of psychological self-help books. Particularly section two has a similar style and tone to the self-help genre. Another marked similarity is in the assumption of a process of admission of guilt before being offered the redemption of an open-armed welcome into the community of teachers who are struggling to give up the way of the cane.

If you have once used corporal punishment as a means of discipline you are not alone; many teachers have only put away their canes or their wooden spoons since the introduction of the new legislation. Many of them have found or are exploring viable alternatives... (p.10)

The teacher has to recognise that he or she has used corporal punishment in order for them to change their behaviour. In the logic of self-help psychology manuals,

recognition of the problem the reader faces is essential. One example of this discourse is drawn from the popular ‘Dr Phil’'s *Relationship Rescue* (McGraw, 2000):

There is an old adage that says, “Half the solution to any problem lies in defining the problem.”

Simply put, we need to know specifically just how good or bad your relationship is, and what makes it that way. You cannot heal or change what you do not acknowledge (McGraw, 2000, p.20).

It is only once the reader has admitted to a drinking problem, a drug addiction or to being unassertive or controlling that he or she can begin to heal. Cowlshaw (2001) notes that John Gray, the author of the popular *Mars and Venus* self-help books, presents such personal self-knowledge as a confession (p.171).

I walked over and silently held her. She wept in my arms. After a few minutes, she thanked me for not leaving. She told me that she just needed to feel me holding her...

In my previous relationships, I had become indifferent and unloving at difficult times, simply because I didn't know what else to do. As a result, my first marriage had been very painful and difficult. This incident with Bonnie revealed to me how I could change this pattern.

It inspired my seven years of research to help develop and refine the insights about men and women in this book. By learning in very practical and specific terms about how men and women are different, I suddenly began to realise that my marriage did not need to be such a struggle. With this new awareness of our differences Bonnie and I were able to improve dramatically our communication and enjoy each other more. (Gray cited in Cowlshaw, 2001, p.171)

Gray's confession is proof of his ability to work major personal change. In another example, Bradshaw (1995) offers as evidence of his credibility his personal understanding of the problem he names and offers solutions for in *Homecoming: Reclaiming & Championing Your Inner Child*.

I couldn't believe I could be so childish. I was 40 years old and I had raged and screamed until everyone – my wife, my stepchildren, and my son – was terrified. Then I got in my car and left them. There I was, sitting all alone in a motel in the middle of our vacation on Padre Island. I felt very alone and ashamed.

When I tried to trace the events that led up to my leaving, I couldn't figure out anything. I was confused. It was like waking up from a bad dream. More than anything, I wanted my family life to be warm, loving, and intimate. But this was the third year I had blown up on our vacation. I had gone away emotionally before – but I had never gone away physically...

The incident on Padre Island occurred in 1976, the year after my father died. Since then I've learned the causes of my rage/withdrawal cycles. The major clue came to me on the Padre Island runaway. While I sat alone and ashamed in that crummy motel room, I began to have vivid memories of my childhood...

What I now understand is that when a child's development is arrested, when feelings are repressed, especially the feelings of anger and hurt, a person grows up to be an adult with an angry, hurt child inside of him. (p.7)

Bradshaw generalises from his own experience to that of his patient: the reader.

The confession genre invokes an intimacy between reader and writer – an intimacy that is certainly deceptive in the case of ACP where teachers reading the document are being informed of a policy shift rather than being asked to contribute to its formulation. Writers employing this textual strategy invoke a sense of sharing confidence, of trust between writer and reader, implying that the reader has the safety to share intimate and potentially damaging personal information. There is a sense of dialogue (Gill, 2001). The confession genre is reciprocal in that the reader is inscribed as subject (Gill, 2001). However, this reciprocity is limited and the reader's participation in the narrative is proscribed by the author's terms. Rather than being a display of weakness, the confession is an assertion of authority.

Speaking to disillusionment with relationship self-help books, McGraw (2000) establishes the credibility of his authority in a confession regarding his professional practice.

It has been fifteen years since I sat with Carol and Larry in my psychology office. They were a pretty typical couple – typical because they were having relationship problems. ...

I started talking, giving Larry and Carol the same platitudes, the same conventional wisdom, that I and every other therapist in the country had been doling out for years. You're going to have to commit to solving your problems, I said. You need to communicate better, see things through your partner's eyes, try to resolve each and every one of your differences...Just as I had been taught, I was acting warm and genuine as I trotted out all the usual responses. *But suddenly all I could hear myself saying was blah, blah, blah. Blah, blah, blah, blah.* As I sat there, I asked myself, "Has anybody noticed over the last fifty years that this crap doesn't work? Has it occurred to anyone that the vast majority of these couples aren't getting any better?"

Here were these two people, searching for answers, and I realised that I was telling them things about "the nature of relationships" that weren't going to make a damn bit of difference...

That day with Carol and Larry was a turning point in my life. I decided that if I continued imparting conventional wisdom, I would be cheating them and everyone like them out of any chance they had to turn their relationship around. I resolved right then and there that I was going to get real about why relationships were failing in America and what needed to be done to turn the tide.

(pp.5-6, my emphasis)

In the face of the loss of credibility associated with the self-help genre, 'Dr Phil' re-establishes his professional authority by confessing his professional ineptitude. At first he undermines his authority by describing his therapeutic approach as 'blah, blah, blah, blah' and as 'not making a damn bit of difference.' He then generalises this approach to being 'conventional wisdom' and so to being practised by other psychologists. When he vows to do better, it is he alone who does so, and as he is set apart from the rest his authority is re-established.

Similarly, in the reworking of authority that ACP offers, teachers are to re-establish their authority as disciplinarians through confessing to corporal punishment. However, in doing so, as readers, they submit to the authority of a narrative in which they are deficient. When self-help books present the reader with a narrative in which they can participate, the reader is offered the power of self-regulation (Rimke, 2000). Although self-help techniques locate the power to change in the individual's desire to do so – and so are empowering – the changes themselves are prescribed and rely on an external authority. In ACP, the teacher is led to believe that they are embarked on a process of self-exploration that will lead them to alter their disciplinary methods and will provide alternative disciplinary strategies.

Take a look at the table below. Use it to continue your exploration of your approach to discipline.

By exploring and confronting your approach, you may begin to discover the areas in which you could adopt alternatives as well as those areas in which you are using discipline effectively (p.10).

However, the implication that genuine self-exploration will take place is misleading since the table essentialises teacher behaviours into good (modern) and bad (savage) ones.

Despite promising (and sometimes delivering) an open text that allows for creativity (p.1), ACP seems sometimes to have all the answers.

1.5 Some common arguments against the banning of corporal punishment

Some educators believe that:

Children will neither show them respect nor develop the discipline to work hard unless they are beaten or threatened with being beaten. They feel that their power as educators has been taken away from them because they are not able to use corporal punishment.

Corporal punishment is quick and easy. Other methods require the time, patience and skill that educators often lack...

1.6 Why corporal punishment is not the solution

Extensive research shows that corporal punishment does not achieve the desired end – a culture of learning and discipline in the classroom ...Key research findings show that corporal punishment:
Does not build a culture of human rights, tolerance and respect.

Does not stop bad behaviour of difficult children. Instead, these children are punished over and over again for the same offences... (pp.6-7)

The DOE is constructed as an omniscient presence whose knowledge is drawn from sources out of the reach and the understanding of ordinary teachers.

When teachers are asked to answer whether they use corporal punishment, whether they have understood the reasons for the abolition of corporal punishment, whether they will put energy into changing, they are really being asked to admit their guilt and their understanding of their guilt. 'Yes, I use corporal punishment,' 'Yes, I recognise why this change is important,' 'Yes, I want to put in the extra energy and effort to change.' There are no other answers allowed for in the logic of the text. As in Christian evangelist texts, the answers are a matter of faith, not argument, and so are beyond doubt.

THREE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS:

Does what you have been reading make sense to you?

Is there any reason you would not be willing to receive God's gift of eternal life?

Are you willing to place your faith in Jesus right now and turn from your sin? (www.csc-online.org/receive_christ.htm, 2002)

and

Are you interested in accepting Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior? ...

What do you treasure the most in your life? Your job, family, house, car, bank account, or how about...your soul?

Everyone's number one priority should be to see about our soul's salvation.

(www.ajcorp.tripod.com/cir/get_saved.html, 2002)

The web texts I am quoting from, devoid of compelling voices, or a crowd of participants, in most cases devoid even of alluring design, are the ultimate cold sell. They draw their authority from the impression they give of having all the answers.

Excuses you may give for not accepting Jesus:

* I am a good person anyway, why do I need Jesus?...

* I am too bad to be saved

* There are too many hypocrites in the church ...

What does the Bible say about these excuses?

* I am a good person anyway, why do I need Jesus?

Romans 3:12 - "There is none that doeth good, no not one."

Romans 3:23 - "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"

Isaiah 64:6 - "We are all as an unclean thing, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,"

* I am too bad to be saved

Matthew 9:13 - "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,"

1 Timothy 1:15 - "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,"

* There are too many hypocrites in the church

Romans 14:12 - "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God,"...

(www.ajcorp.tripod.com/cir/get_saved.html, 2002)

Christian evangelism draws its authority from its asserted proximity to the divine. In exchange for surrendering control, it promises freedom from anxiety.

To give Jesus control of our lives is like driving down the highway with another person. As long as you are driving, you are in control. If you realized you don't know the way, but the other person does, you might say, "You take the wheel and drive." Then the other person is in control and the two of you take the route he or she chooses. (www.csc-online.org/receive_christ.htm, 2002)

Similarly, in Alcoholics Anonymous' Twelve Steps, the importance of confession – the subject of four of the twelve steps – is second only to the importance of relinquishing responsibility to God.

THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings...

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

(www.alcoholicsanonymous.org, 2002, my emphasis)

Confession is part of the process of relinquishing control. The authority gained in confession is dependent on being the author of the narrative – the one who absolves. True authority lies in becoming one who absolves.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

(www.alcoholicsanonymous.org, 2002)

When teachers are asked what they will do on “those days when nothing seems to work”, the implication is that corporal punishment is an addiction rather than an illegal and inhumane classroom practice. The ‘reformed’ teacher might ‘fall off the wagon’. Although corporal punishment is linked in section one with the system of violence that apartheid was, more generally teachers who use corporal punishment are presented as out of control rather than as part of a system of brutalising. Teacher authority becomes a matter of inadequate control – self-control or otherwise. In ACP, in being asked to confess and be healed, teachers are being asked to relinquish control and submit to the authority of the state’s representation of them. This is fundamentally at odds not only with the project of re-establishing teacher classroom authority, but with the project of democratic revision of a culture of authority⁷.

Whether the confessions encouraged in ACP are understood as the state’s assertion of authority and control over teachers, as part of the process of being born again as a modern teacher, or as a political renunciation, the confessions sustain a dichotomy between then and now. ACP reinvokes the savage in the idea that teachers confess their psychological dysfunction, their political crimes, their evil nature in order to be born again into the new democracy. Unlike in the media representations, teachers are not understood as savage in comparison to the modern, but in comparison to themselves. The break they must make is with their own practice in the past. In ACP the past is savage.

Then and now

The DOE relies on a series of binary oppositions in ACP: good teacher/ bad teacher, discipline/ punishment, learner/ child, and good learner/ bad learner. In ACP the binary oppositions stand for different positions in time, and so, ultimately, signify the modernity/ apartheid (savagery) dichotomy – or then and now.

⁷ The political confession has tremendous currency in South Africa after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings where South Africans were encouraged to confess publicly to their apartheid crimes in exchange for amnesty from criminal trial.

Asmal presents a situation where there is a dramatic before and after – punishment *versus* discipline. Discipline is defined as the opposite of punishment. Corporal punishment is defined as

Any deliberate act against a child that inflicts pain or physical discomfort to punish or contain him/her. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, slapping, pinching, paddling, or hitting a child with a hand or with an object; denying or restricting a child's use of the toilet, denying meals, drink, heat and shelter, pushing or pulling a child with force, forcing the child to do exercise (p.6).

Sarcasm and shouting are also included later as falling under corporal punishment. It is important to note that corporal punishment is defined to include humiliations beyond the systematic administration of whippings or caning. More than this, it comes to indicate a certain attitude towards students, and towards order. In '1. Why Corporal Punishment is Banned', the bedrock of the argument is that the practice of corporal punishment is illegal and that it is a major contributing factor to social violence (pp.6, 8). In the rest of the document argument comes to rely more on painting an unsavoury picture of a teacher who uses corporal punishment. This person is authoritarian, controlling, harms and humiliates children, and is essentially malevolent. Unlike a teacher who punishes, the teacher who disciplines is corrective and nurturing, and uses discipline proactively and constructively. It is the action of a controlled (not controlling), essentially good-natured teacher who has the students' best interests at heart. The student who is punished is also different from the student who is disciplined. In ACP punishment is associated with the idea of a child, while discipline is the domain of the learner.

The other view on managing the school environment is that discipline rather than punishment is used proactively and constructively. In such a system, learners experience an educative, corrective approach in which they learn to exercise self-control, respect others and accept the consequences of their actions. (p.9)

Children are cast as the victims of what is described as a retrogressive ideology – enacted in punishment. Learners⁸, on the other hand, are associated with what is presented as the rather more clean-cut practice of discipline. Learners are characterised as more active in this system. They experience, learn, respect and accept: they are subjects rather than objects. 'Learner' comes to connote someone

⁸ The South African Schools Act (1996) (SASA) defines 'learner' as "any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of this Act". In 3(1) of SASA (1996) in which it is specified who must attend school, the learner is described as someone who is between the ages of seven and fifteen, as well as someone who is still attending school after the age of fifteen. However, despite the inclusivity of the term it cannot escape acquiring connotations as government directives and popular discourse shape the roles of learners and of educators.

who is, in contrast to the 'child', quite empowered⁹. Learners can have "proper communication" and "caring relationships" with educators (p.7). While children are described as being the victims of circumstance, learners make decisions (although mostly poor ones) regarding their behaviour. While children are static, learners 'develop'. Children, when exposed to violence, will continue to practice that violence, incapable of making a judgement distinct from their environment. Learners, in contrast, may be on "a *path* of violence and gangsterism" (my emphasis). The use of the word 'path' implies the possibility of choosing to step off that path or return on it. In this the idea of childhood innocence is displaced into the 'child'. Given what Giroux (1998) argues, that the idea of childhood innocence is disempowering to young people, perhaps the invention of a signifier of youth that is less 'innocent' but not necessarily culpable is essential to the process of ensuring that students have legitimate and appropriate access to power in schools.

However, the binary oppositions are easily exploded. The 'learners' and 'children' are the same people; the 'good teachers' and the 'bad teachers' are the same people. Even the distinction between 'punishment' and 'discipline' is porous. If we understand regulated corporal punishment as a part of panopticon control, then the abolition of corporal punishment is merely another step towards self-regulation, or even as a shift in how self-regulation is practised. Further, it does not follow that the abolition of corporal punishment signals a profound change in institutional culture. Slee (1988, 1995) points out how in Australian schools exclusion simply replaces corporal punishment. Instead of the paradigm shift expected on the abolition of corporal punishment, exclusion is simply substituted for corporal punishment. The same people continued to be punished for the same crimes. While it is true that exclusion is less brutal than beating, exclusion is as unsuccessful in reducing disruption as

⁹ The use of the terms 'children' and 'learners' is linked with the structure of ACP. The idea of the child is used in the first section to support the argument against corporal punishment. The very neutrality of the term 'learner' does not lend itself to evoking the same kind of vulnerability and need for protection that the term 'child' does. Schoolgoers are referred to both as 'learners' and as 'children' in Minister Asmal's preface and in the Introduction. However, in the opening paragraphs of '1. Why Corporal Punishment is Banned' 'learners' become 'children'. This way of referring to schoolgoers is in keeping with the discourse of children's rights to which this section of the policy document of necessity refers to frequently (see especially pp. 5-6). During the rest of this section schoolgoers are referred to almost exclusively as 'children'. This is in direct contrast to the second and third sections where the exact opposite is true. By '2.2 Reflection', where educators are asked to reflect on their own behaviour, the pro-active misbehaviour of the learner, and the vulnerability and concomitant passivity of the child has been subsumed into one word: 'learner'.

corporal punishment was. Arguably it has an equally deleterious effect on the student, frequently leaving him or her stranded outside the mainstream school system.

Exclusion, like corporal punishment, does nothing to bolster a student's faith in the schooling system, or his or her trust of authority figures (Slee, 1995).

The distinction between discipline and punishment may better be described as a distinction between apartheid and post-apartheid. The good teacher is the post-apartheid teacher; the bad teacher is the apartheid teacher. The learner is the democratic subject – empowered, vocal, contextualised. The child is the subject of savagery – inarticulate, victimised, decontextualised. The dichotomy of savagery and civilisation is stretched across time with the border in 1994, when 'then' became 'now'.

Of course savagery has always referred backwards out of modernity. To designate savagery *is* to look back from modernity, from the position of the developed back into time at the underdeveloped. What is curious and interesting about the perspective offered in ACP is that it occupies the present. In ACP the reader looks back at the savage past and forward to 'modernity'. In this sense the reader occupies the intermediary position described by Mudimbe (1988). However, if the reader looks towards a modernity that is not self-described, towards a theory of development that is really a theory of African underdevelopment, then the position occupied is the same one as before.

Without... a reinscription of the sign [of modernity] itself – without a transformation of the site of *enunciation* – there is the danger that the mimetic contents of a discourse will conceal the fact that the hegemonic structures of power are maintained in a position of authority through a *shift in vocabulary* in the position of authority. There is for instance a kinship between the normative paradigms of colonial anthropology and the contemporary discourse of aid and development agencies. The 'transfer of technology' has not resulted in the transfer of power or the displacement of a 'neo-colonial tradition of political control through philanthropy – a celebrated missionary position. (Bhabha, 1994, p.242)

The figure of the savage is necessary to a discursive framework that invokes conversion to civilisation. ACP does not escape missionary discourse, and so, does not successfully rewrite savagery, integrate savagery into its account of the present. However, there is in this document an articulation of clearly (sometimes jarringly) heterogenous forms and meanings that Fairclough (1995) would describe as evidence

of cultural change. The self-help discourse of the second section sits uneasily with the careful contextualisation in section one and the legal exposition of section three. In this, even if not in the proposal of a single system of South African school punishment, ACP signals a significant – if not entirely resolved – shift in discursive practice.

Bhabha proposes a way of “writing cultural difference in the midst of modernity that is inimical to binary boundaries” such as past and present (p.251). He suggests a ‘contra-modernity’, what Nandy (1983 cited in Bhabha, 1994) describes as ‘non-modern’. For Mudimbe (1988) the project of asserting African subjectivity is also dependent on being in a position of authorship over history. This is not achieved in a binary opposition of the past and the present, as in ACP, but in articulating the present with the past, through, for instance, laying claim to the traditional. This is not the case in ACP where there is virtually no reference to the traditional - to the ‘strictness’ cited in newspaper representations of discipline¹⁰. The lack of reference to ‘strictness’ is all the more surprising given the strong characterisation in the press of the DOE and minister Asmal in particular as ‘strict’. The lack of engagement with ‘tradition’, where tradition is understood to refer to ‘strictness’ or even to the idea of authoritarianism as African – a way of understanding that cannot simply be dismissed – means that these signifieds are simply subsumed into ‘apartheid savagery’.

The student photographs that I discuss in chapter five broach the intermediary space more successfully. Despite the continued reiteration of tropes of savagery, and a continued preoccupation with modernity, students transgress the frontier between modernity and savagery. However, the ‘temporal delinquency’ portrayed in ACP takes the form in the media representations of a raced delinquency. In this the spectre of the black delinquent inscribed in colonial discourse continues to be reiterated in contemporary discourse. The ontology of authoritarianism in the news reports is familiar as the colonial and apartheid fantasy of African despotism, closer perhaps than the individual psychological, moral and political culpability portrayed in ACP. In this next re-telling, as in the last, teachers remain culpable. Teachers are held

¹⁰ There is one reference in the preface:

responsible for the authoritarianism that was a key feature of the systemic implementation of apartheid, and of the production of race. This authoritarianism was produced in relation to race – as Chisholm (1999) points out, black teachers were subject to greater ‘despotic’ bureaucratic control than white teachers were. Student resistance, which was translated into crime in apartheid discursive practice, was never a feature of white schools – nor were violent police reprisals. These signs of savagery – authoritarian teachers, massed students – that constitute school disorder are raced. Despite the distance between the idea of temporal delinquency and the idea of raced delinquency, traces of a raced concept of delinquency remain not only in the very idea of modernisation – and in the way it is expressed here as a conglomerate of binary opposites – but also in the continued culpability of teachers.

ACP sets out an ideal of transformation in its content and in its form. Its flaws are, I believe, considerable and potentially debilitating, but these do not diminish the vision that is displayed: that public South African schools may be peaceful, studious spaces where students are never subjected either to the brutality of corporal punishment or of racism and sexism.

Despite its prohibition, we are aware of continuing cases of corporal punishment which are brought to our attention, or reported in the media. We have to be firm and in some cases we have requested that charges be laid against the educator concerned.

4. THE REITERATION OF SAVAGERY: NEWS REPRESENTATIONS OF SCHOOL DISRUPTION

In 'Teachers fire on pupils' (*Mail&Guardian*, 21 May 1999) the school is the setting of a scene of 'derring-do' that is resonant with movies set in the American 'wild west': teachers are held hostage by students and come out of the staff room with their pistols blazing. The savagery of teachers' and students' actions are ordered, finally, by the police arresting and charging individuals. Although in other articles dramatic stories are not necessarily told with as much flair, this article is nevertheless typical in its representations of student delinquency, teachers' authority and the school space itself.

TEACHERS FIRE ON PUPILS

Date: 21 May 1999

TWO teachers, including a school principal, opened fire on a group of their pupils in KwaZulu-Natal on Thursday, killing one and seriously wounding three. The incident happened when pupils from a high school in the Cele district, south of Durban, stoned their teachers to protest the bus fare required for a school outing, The Starreports. The teachers had taken refuge in the staff room. According to the newspaper, the school principal and a colleague emerged brandishing pistols. Several shots were fired and a pupil was killed and three others wounded. Police said the two teachers have been arrested and will face murder charges.

Figure 9. 'Teachers fire on pupils' Mail&Guardian 21 May 1999.

The news reports drawn from the *Business Day*, *Mail&Guardian* and *Sowetan* (1996-2002) that are analysed in this chapter present a more or less consistent, simplistic narrative of school discipline and delinquency. The apartheid and colonial tropes of the savage traced in the last chapter are clearly reiterated in contemporary South African news reports. In the news reports teachers are commonly characterised as out of control authority figures who either abuse their authority in, for example, sexual delinquency, or who fail to have authority, and so do not provide students with leadership. Students are predominantly characterised as unruly mobs that may be well intentioned in that they desire efficient service or justice, but which are nevertheless criminal in effect. What is also constant in the newspaper representations reviewed here is the equation of disorder with savagery. Further, order is equated with modernising. Schools are problematic

spaces for popular dissent, where modernity is tested and more commonly fails than succeeds. In this there is also a powerful narrative of the state's role in contemporary South Africa, which, although fascinating and although I do discuss it briefly, mostly falls outside the scope of this dissertation. My concern in this chapter is with how teachers, students and schools are represented in contemporary South African news reports. This concern is partly formed out of the importance of mass media in both producing and reflecting current discursive practices. As such any discussion of contemporary South African discursive practice must refer to media discourse. My interest in news media is also informed by the importance in the media of school discipline and delinquency. Schools feature regularly as spaces of conflict, and the conflict recorded resonates powerfully with a current media (and popular) preoccupation with crime that may be termed a moral panic. My hypothesis, that this context is important to understanding how school discipline features in policy, is borne out by the importance of the trope of the savage teacher in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*.

In this chapter, I first discuss how newspaper portrayals of students draw on the trope of the savage crowd. I then discuss how teachers are represented as failing in their authority either due to inadequacy or to brutality. The school is presented as a disorderly space where savagery is reformed, and modernity and tradition defined – a frontier I examine the implicit and explicit explanations given in the articles for disruption in terms of modernity and tradition. . The narrative of teachers' savagery occasions a narrative of the state disciplining teachers, and in doing so asserting its modernity. Finally, I discuss the implications of the 'punitive scene' (Foucault, 1977) where the state disciplines teachers, as well as scenes of savage punishment in terms of the problematic of a temporal frontier between modernity and savagery. Before presenting my analysis, I will discuss my methodology.

Methodology

I have discussed my reasons for choosing to analyse news reports in more detail in the introduction. However, this analysis forms part of contextualising *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* in terms of contemporary South African discourse. The relationship

between what might be termed ‘popular’ discourse and media discourse is not a simple one (I discuss this point in more detail later in the chapter as well as in the introduction; see also Fairclough, 1995; O’Shaughnessy & Stadler, 2002). However inasmuch as news reports may be considered as productive of social order (and in some cases as hegemonic), in that news reports draw on readers’ ‘consensus knowledge’ (Hall, 1973; Macmillan, 2002), they may be considered as reflective of social order. In addition to the relationship between popular and media discourse, news discourse is an important and extremely influential aspect of late modern existence. In its influence it is, along with policy discourse, arguably one of the most important macro-discursive frameworks in South Africa.

Sample

In this chapter I examine articles selected from the *Business Day*, *Mail&Guardian* and *Sowetan* newspapers. All three are print publications, but the *Mail&Guardian* also publishes on the internet as *ZA Online*. Articles that were drawn from this source are indicated as published by the *Mail&Guardian*. The articles are all published in the post-apartheid period from 1996 to 2002. This period was selected as contemporaneous to the publication of *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, and the completion of the students’ photography project. The decision to extend the sample period back to 1996 was informed by the desire to generate a larger and therefore more representative sample size. It was felt that a larger sample size would give a better indication of prevalent discursive patterns. In addition the relatively large sample period means that trends in representation will tend not to be associated with specific events.

The articles were selected by searching for the key words ‘school/s’, ‘learner/s’, ‘pupil/s’, ‘teachers’, ‘education’, ‘corporal punishment’, ‘discipline’ and ‘crime’. It should be noted that the articles in the sample are set predominantly in schools that would have been reserved for black students under apartheid legislation, and where the student body continues to be made up mostly of students who would have been classified as black. It should also be noted that despite the relatively large sample period (, similar

characterisations of teachers and students, and very similar narratives of school disorder are presented across the sample period.

The newspapers were chosen according to their accessibility, and because they represented a wide range of readership. The *Business Day*, *Mail&Guardian* and the *Sowetan* together draw readers from a wide sector of South African readers. The *Business Day* caters to a corporate readership of high earners (of whom 40% earn more than R12 000 per month¹). The *Mail&Guardian*, historically left-wing, caters for highly educated readers². The paper was vocal in its criticism of the apartheid state, and continues to occupy a ‘watchdog’ role with regard to the state. The *Sowetan*’s readership is predominantly black, having some high school education and middle income earners (AMPS 2000). My aim in discussing newspaper reports that involve punishment, crime and authority in schools is not to provide empirical evidence of events that took place. Rather, these reports indicate the mythologies of discipline and punishment in education that are current.

Analysis

I have analysed the articles in terms of the narrative of school disruption that they propose – as media theorist Street puts it “as stories about the world which call into play some actors (and marginalise others), which suppose some motivations and ignore others, and so on” (2001, p.35). I am interested in what the narratives of school disorder are suggested in the *Business Day*, *Mail&Guardian* and *Sowetan* newspapers. In this I have employed some of the strategies of content analysis, and divided the 262 articles into categories reflecting how teachers, students and the school space itself were characterised in them. Like Macmillan (2002)³ I relied in this division largely on the articles’ headlines. Emmison and Smith (2000) point out that the headline is a crucial part of what draws readers to articles. Macmillan (2002) uses this understanding of headlines in her analysis

¹ ‘Business Day readers young and well-heeled’ *Business Day* 24 August 2001.

² ‘Africa’s even better read’ *Mail&Guardian* 6 August 1999; ‘Amps figures confirm our growth’ *Mail&Guardian* 24 August 2001.

³ Macmillan (2002) investigates the representation of school disruption in the British tabloid press. She finds that events in schools are represented in ways that appeal to the political interests of the newspaper’s readership.

of British tabloid representations of school disruptions. Her analysis is geared, as mine is, towards establishing not so much the facts of the stories but the way in which the newspaper markets it. In this process newspaper headlines signal a narrative that draws on or affirms the 'consensus knowledge' (Hall, 1973) a reader has access to. I am interested in what the common 'consensual' narratives are that my selection of South African newspapers draw on and affirm in their representations of school disruption. While Macmillan (2002) examines how specific newspapers' interests are revealed in their headlines, I am interested in the commonalities in the different newspapers' representations.

The categories were drawn from the articles themselves (i.e. were not pre-determined). In the case of teachers I divided articles into groups according to how teachers were portrayed as victims, criminal, valued professionals, and on strike. Articles focused through the headline on students were divided into victim students (of, for instance, rape), rioting students, matric students (where students were referred to positively in relation to the matriculation exam), cheating students, and criminal students. The categories 'rioting' and 'criminal' were distinguished from each other by whether students were presented as disciplined (either by the police or the school authorities) or as out of control. In addition, where students were 'criminal' they tended to be represented as individuals rather than as a mass. Articles where students were represented as rioting include discussions of why students are rioting. While some of these articles display sympathy for why students wish to riot (and I will return to this point later in the chapter), students are nevertheless represented as a mass that is ultimately threatening to law and order. Where feasible the groups of characterisations were divided according to topic for both teachers and students, for instance criminal teachers could be subdivided into cheaters, rapists, etc. Some articles could also be analysed according to the position the state occupied in the article, i.e. whether the state featured metaphorically as physician, disciplinarian, etc. This was most common in the case of articles focused on teachers. This last analysis revealed the importance of the metaphor of disciplining in the relationship between the state and the school. The broad categories of representations (of students, teachers and the state) inform the structure of the discussion of my analysis that follows in this chapter. As

well as indicating what the main trends are, I will also discuss specific articles that exemplify the most numerically significant of the categories. This method primarily serves the purpose of enabling the examination of a large number of texts, and does not facilitate close reading. However, I have selected a number of articles that are in the complexity of the narrative they present worthy of closer textual analysis. As well as being revealing of broader discursive patterns, these articles serve to problematise the simplistic narrative presented in the overwhelming majority of the news articles reviewed. I should make the point that the ways in which teachers and students are characterised is remarkably consistent across the sample, and that in-depth discussions of the phenomenon of school disruption is rare enough to make the selection of complex representations a fairly simple matter. I have selected two articles to compare in close textual analysis. The first presents a slightly more in-depth narrative than usual ('Angry youth poisons parents' *Mail&Guardian*, 13 December 1996), but nevertheless represents the events in a way that is cohesive with other representations. The second presents an extraordinary intersection of crime and education ('Suspect in toddler's hanging has dog named Kader Asmal' *Sowetan*, 27 October 2000).

Given the notable consistency in how teachers, students and schools were represented, I was especially interested in the narrative of school disruption that emerged in the articles. I primarily refer to intertextual patterns in the reporting (Barker & Galasinski, 2001), looking at how the tropes defined in the last chapter feature in these contemporary accounts. Specifically I look at the prevalence of the 'savage crowd', the 'savage authority' as well as at the complex of signs brought into currency in the punitive scenes narrated in the articles (Foucault, 1977). Foucault has described the process of representing social control as 'punitive scenes that established [couplings of crime-punishment] or reinforced them in the eyes of all, a discourse that is circulated, [bringing] back into currency at each moment the complex of signs' (1977, 128). In the last part of my analysis I examine the complex of signs that is brought into currency by the punitive scenes narrated in the news reports.

In stating that a single narrative of school disruption is presented, I am not suggesting that these media accounts have a clearly defined goal or a single purpose (see also Mickler, 1998). As Fairclough (1995) puts it:

Media texts function ideologically... but also operate as cultural commodities in a competitive market, are part of the business of entertaining people, are designed to keep people politically and socially informed, are cultural artifacts in their own right, informed by particular aesthetics; and they are at the same time caught up in reflecting and contributing to shifting cultural values and identities. (47)

Rather I suggest that the narrative presented is located in a broader social narrative that was established at least partly by the colonial and apartheid states. The news narrative of school disruption is a trace of a narrative that served colonial and apartheid interests. This does not, however, mean that the media accounts are not powerful in producing contemporary discourse. Their power in shaping how this particular issue is perceived is certainly cause for concern when such a singular point of view is presented. I have not attempted to quantify the cumulative effects of these stories of depraved teachers and wild students, but can only assume that it is not constructive or generative of alternative discursive practice in schools.

That said, the narrative under discussion here forms only part of how the newspapers analysed here report on current events. The accounts of school discipline are part of each newspaper's different presentation of the news. As Macmillan (2002) observes, the press is not simply reporting on events but producing these events for popular consumption. News reports are to some extent, then, vehicles for catering to readership interests (Macmillan, 2002). How school delinquency is represented serves different interests in each of the newspapers analysed here. For instance, in the *Mail&Guardian* with its watchdog tradition, accounts of school disruption form part of a critique of government efficiency. For the *Sowetan* accounts of school disruption form part of a narrative of the reinstatement of social order, and so school disruption is a foil for successful government intervention. In the *Business Day* school disruption is a foil for part of a certain slant on industrial relations, where the state institutes order by quelling industrial action. However, in all these accounts the dominant narrative is one that favours a binary opposition of order and savagery. Representations of teachers, students and schools bear

out narratives of modernity versus savagery that suggest a narrative in which the present is occluded in favour of a binary opposition of past and future.

Student mob

Not all articles surveyed in this study are focused on students. Some articles deal predominantly with teachers or with education policy (where state officials are often the protagonists). However, in those that are focused on students, students tend to be associated with unlawful disorder. Some articles associate students positively or negatively with matriculation⁴, and others associate students with criminal acts like cheating. However, of those that portray student disruption, students tend to be associated with an apartheid trope of savagery: massed (raced) delinquency. The line of reasoning exhibited in the framing of corporal punishment in schools – that corporal punishment is the result of schools that are out of control – begs the question ‘what kinds of ‘discipline problems’ might teachers have to deal with?’ According to newspaper reports, some schools are the setting for extreme student delinquency. The delinquency reported on falls into the following broad categories: report card fraud and cheating in exams⁵, gang violence⁶, racial clashes⁷, rape⁸, assault⁹, and vandalism¹⁰. There are also occasional

⁴ E.g. ‘Matric pupils on to ‘good start’’ *Sowetan* 21 October 1997, ‘MEC wishes pupils well in exams’ *Sowetan* 9 October 2001, ‘Deputy minister lauds pupils’ fine initiative’ *Sowetan* 1 August 2000, ‘Fatigue a pupil’s greatest enemy’ *Sowetan* 27 October 2000, ‘So far so good for matriculation exams’ *Sowetan* 18 October 2000, ‘Guide to help pupils’ *Sowetan* 12 September 2000, ‘740 000 matrics register for exams’ *Sowetan* 22 September 2000, ‘On your marks, get set for matric exams’ *Sowetan* 28 September 2000, ‘Well-planned exams begin’ *Sowetan* 17 October 2000 (this article is associated with students through the accompanying photograph), ‘Day of reckoning near for matrics’ *Sowetan* 10 October 2000, ‘Matric exam plan welcomed’ *Sowetan* 14 September 1999 [story focused on pupil in picture].

⁵ E.g. ‘Police probe selling of fake school report cards’ *Business Day* 11 April 2000, ‘Report card fraud rife in Cape schools’ *Business Day* 18 May 2000, ‘Seven held after exam paper leak’ *Business Day* 19 October 2000, ‘Two Springs pupils found guilty of cheating’ *Business Day* 31 October 2001, ‘Pupil had copy of matric exam paper’ *Sowetan* 30 October 2001, ‘Bread-cheats deprive hungry schoolchildren’ *Sowetan* 17 October 2001.

⁶ E.g. ‘Teenager shot dead on flats’ *Mail&Guardian* 21 April 1999,

⁷ E.g. ‘Racist attack schoolboy to sue’ *Sowetan* 21 August 2000, ‘Pupils sent home after racial clashes’ *Sowetan* 31 August 2000, ‘MEC pleads for calm at Vryburg’ *Sowetan* 18 October 2000, ‘Pupils should not be expelled’ *Business Day* 2 August 2000, ‘MEC appeals for calm at North West high school’ *Business Day* 18 October 2000, ‘Race clashes close Pretoria school’ *Mail&Guardian* 14 May 1997, ‘Race riot pupils face charges’ *Mail&Guardian* 15 May 1997.

⁸ E.g. ‘6 Young pupils charged with raping classmate’ *Sowetan* 3 August 2000, ‘Dept rejects school’s plan to expel pupil’ *Sowetan* 11 August 2000, ‘6 Young pupils charged with raping classmate’ *Mail&Guardian* 19 September 2001.

⁹ E.g. ‘Shock at pupil’s assault of teacher’ *Sowetan* 22 September 2000, ‘Pupils beat principals’ *Mail&Guardian* 21 April 1999, ‘High school stabber banned’ *Mail&Guardian* 8 April 2000.

reports of poor attendance, drug abuse¹¹, and school responses to pregnancy¹². In the reported cases of corporal punishment, it was administered for making a noise in class ('Family to sue over beating' *Mail&Guardian*, 20 March 2001), and for failing to contribute financially to a teacher's income ('Corporal punishment for failing to cough up' *Mail&Guardian* 20 October 2000).

Students are most often portrayed as rioting mobs¹³. In what has been described as 'schoolyard vigilantism' by education minister Kader Asmal and as 'lynch mob tactics' by Gauteng province's MEC for education, Ignatius Jacobs (*Business Day*, 18 August 2000), groups of students across the country did serious damage to school property and occasionally seriously harmed educators. The issues that raised student ire cover a wide range, but student protests are predominantly presented as in response to disgraceful behaviour on the part of educators, and national and provincial authorities. This is an interesting point as it suggests that students are envisaged as disciplining the state in a narrative that refers to the popular struggle against apartheid (see chapter two). I will return to this point later in this chapter. Although students have, for instance, created

¹⁰ E.g. 'Hoërskool Warrenton fire estimated at R2m' *Business Day* 16 May 2001, 'Pupil to be charged with arson' *Mail&Guardian* 18 January 2000.

¹¹ E.g. 'High times for SA teens' *Mail&Guardian* 25 August 2000.

¹² E.g. 'Pregnant pupils to be discussed' *Sowetan* 11 September 2000, 'Schools throw out pregnant teens' *Mail&Guardian* 10 August 2001.

¹³ E.g. 'Chaos as pupils march for books' *Sowetan* 5 February 1998, 'How will marching help pupils?' *Sowetan* 11 February 1998, 'Pupils rampage over suicide' *Sowetan* 15 August 2000, 'Rampage students reprimanded' *Sowetan* 18 August 2000, 'Angry pupils stone Putco bus' *Sowetan* 18 August 2000, 'Five schools close after protests' *Business Day* 29 May 2000, 'Use proper grievance channels, pupils told' *Business Day* 1 July 2000 'Pupils go on rampage after teacher is shot dead' *Business Day* 20 August 2000, 'MEC sees growing trend of lynch-mob tactics in schools' *Business Day* 18 August 2000, 'Youth Day... education wobbles in the new era' *Business Day* 18 June 2000, 'Stand and deliver us from hell' *Business Day* 13 May 2000, 'Asmal urges society to listen more to pupils' *Business Day* 29 August 2000, 'Race clashes close Pretoria school' *Mail&Guardian* 14 May 1997, 'Race riot pupils face charges' *Mail&Guardian* 15 May 1997 'Teachers fire on pupils' *Mail&Guardian* 21 May 1999, 'Asmal cracks down on Cosas' *Mail&Guardian* 2 June 2000, 'Police stun revolting pupils' *Mail&Guardian* 15 August 2000, 'Enraged pupils stone abductors to death' *Mail&Guardian* 21 August 2000, 'School affairs spark class boycotts' *Mail&Guardian* 11 September 2000, 'Cosas plans anarchy at schools' *Mail&Guardian* 1 May 2001, 'Mpuma pupils fired on police' *Mail&Guardian* 21 May 2001, 'Education boss must go, demands Cosas' *Mail&Guardian* 24 August 2001, 'PAC fails to condemn student violence' *Mail&Guardian* 28 March 2002, 'Eastern Cape education chaos' *Mail&Guardian* 26 April 2002, 'When things fall apart' *Mail&Guardian* 31 May 2002.

havoc over the absence of funds for a matric farewell¹⁴, most of the issues could be described as serious popular concerns regarding the management of schools (such as embezzlement¹⁵, lack of school supplies¹⁶, and sexual relationships between students and teachers¹⁷).

Students are described as 'using lynch-mob tactics to solve conflict' ('MEC sees growing trend of lynch-mob tactics in schools' *Business Day* 18 August 2000). In general the representations of rioting students are similar to those of vigilante groups in that large numbers of students are involved in pursuing violent retribution for a perceived wrong. In 'Pupils rampage over suicide' (below) students react violently to a friend's suicide. They believe that his suicide was related to an argument with his father over the theft of a gun's magazine. In their rage the students burn down his father's cottage and set two cars

Pupils rampage over suicide

By Vicky Somniso

Hundreds of pupils at the Thabo Lekedi High School in Moskorus on the East Rand went on the rampage yesterday, burning the school's cottage and two cars after a pupil committed suicide following an argument with his father who is caretaker of the school.

The pupils, aged between 13 and 20, allegedly accused the caretaker of having been abusive to his son, who committed suicide by hanging himself with a kettle cord at the weekend.

Pupils and teachers said the body of Christopher Tshababala (22), a grade 12 pupil, was found on Sunday in the school's cottage, which he shared with his father. He appeared to have hanged himself on Saturday.

Police spokesman Inspector Thabile Natsika confirmed the

incident. He said Christopher committed suicide after his father had accused him of stealing the magazine of his father's gun.

The boy's father was said to have fled the house before the pupils arrived. He was believed to have gone into hiding yesterday.

Christopher's classmates said Christopher had told them that on the day of the argument with his father he (the father) pointed a gun at him and started shouting at random.

During the protest the angry mob blocked the roads on the way to the school with rocks. They threw stones at reporters and fire brigade members, denying them access to the school and the fire at the school cottage.

It is said that the dead boy's father managed to escape after being tipped off by one of his colleagues that the pupils were on

their way to burn down his home.

Gauteng department of education spokesman Mr Lebele Maloka said the department would investigate the matter.

"We send our condolences to the family but we believe the best way to honour the loss of a fellow pupil is to ensure that pupils learn effectively to secure the future of this country," he said.

"Since the department has introduced peer counselling in the schools we will send the social and psychological services to deal with the trauma of the school community," said Maloka.

"We condemn violence as means of showing dissatisfaction, anger or trauma over the loss of a loved one in the strongest terms.

"We call for calm so that we can show respect for the dead boy."

● See photo on page 3

Figure 10. 'Pupils rampage over suicide' *Sowetan* 15 August 2000

¹⁴ 'MEC sees growing trend of lynch-mob tactics in schools' *Business Day* 18 August 2000. Similarly see 'What ails our rural schools?' *Sowetan* 5 October 2000 and 'Teachers fire on pupils' *Mail&Guardian* 21 May 1999.

¹⁵ 'Hoërskool Warrenton fire estimated at R2m' *Business Day* 16 May 2001.

¹⁶ 'Education boss must go, demands Cosas' *Mail&Guardian* 24 August 2001, 'Eastern Cape education chaos' *Mail&Guardian* 26 April 2002.

alight. They also barricade a road and prevent members of the public and firemen from putting out the fire.

The students are described as a mob, and their actions – setting cars alight and barricading roads – are familiar from news reports in the 1980s when the most aggressive civil protests against apartheid took place. As discussed in chapter two, the motif of vigilante justice was and continues to be a dominant trope of savagery. The association of student delinquency with vigilante groups associates students with the tropes of the savage crowd and with savage authority. The association with apartheid student protests may also explain the tendency in the reports, despite the extreme nature of the incidents reported, to portray students as criminally misguided rather than as malicious. Given their importance in the post-apartheid narrative of the struggle for democracy, the apartheid student protests are endowed with positive values that mean they retain a kind of innocence despite the dominance of the apartheid association of savagery with mass action that continues to be reiterated in contemporary discourse.

In the above example as well as in the majority of reports examined, students' violent acts are predominantly located in attempts to see justice done. I include here reports where students respond violently in retaliation to crimes such as sexual assault and murder in the school community¹⁸. In this group of reports, the largest group of texts where students are associated with violence, situations are presented in which students respond as a group to perceived injustice. The injustices, albeit sometimes Byzantine (as below), are by and large convincing. In 'Enraged pupils stone abductors to death' (*Mail&Guardian* 21 August 2000), for instance, students attack two men who fired on their teacher. One of the men who attacked the teacher was her lover, and the two attackers also killed another of the teacher's lovers.

¹⁷ E.g. 'School affairs spark class boycott' *Mail&Guardian* 11 September 2000.

¹⁸ E.g. 'Gumba ends in tragedy' *Sowetan* 8 August 2000, 'Pupils rampage over suicide' *Sowetan* 15 August 2000, 'Rampage school pupils reprimanded' *Sowetan* 18 August 2000, 'Angry pupils stone Putco bus' *Sowetan* 18 August 2000, 'Use proper grievance channels, pupils told' *Business Day* 1 June 2000, 'Pupils rampage after teacher is shot dead' *Business Day* 20 August 2000, 'MEC sees growing trend of lynch-mob tactics in schools' *Business Day* 18 August 2000, 'Enraged pupils stone abductors to death' *Mail&Guardian* 21 August 2000, 'Mpuma pupils fired on police' *Mail&Guardian* 31 May 2001.

ENRAGED PUPILS STONE ABDUCTORS TO DEATH

Date: 21 Aug 2000

A MOB of enraged pupils stoned to death on Tuesday two men who seriously wounded a woman teacher and shot dead her lover at a rural high school in KwaZulu-Natal. Police said the two men arrived at the Isembela High School, near Inanda Dam, about 20 kilometres north of the Durban, with the teacher's lover, whom they had abducted earlier. The men called the teacher out of the classroom. "On seeing her, they shot the abducted man and then fired upon the teacher," Naidoo said. "The motive appears to be related to a lovers' quarrel," he said. The teacher was apparently also involved in a relationship with one of the abductors. The pupils turned on the killers and stoned them to death.

Figure 11. 'Enraged pupils stone abductors to death' Mail&Guardian 21 August 2000.

Although the headline indicates that the article is about the students' outrageous and criminal actions, the story deals far more with the motive for the stoning: the students witnessed their teacher being shot at. We are not told where and when the students stoned the attackers, but the implication is that they saved their teacher from further harm. There is in this representation, once again, a sense of students' innocence. In part the teachers' culpability lies in her corruption of innocence through her love life impinging on her classroom. The students' innocence is demonstrated in how their violent action is represented as a misguided attempt to protect their teacher: to accord her respect. In this the idea of childhood as innocent is evoked. Giroux (1998) argues that the idea of childhood innocence mystifies the ways in which young people are exploited and, especially, the ways in which they are increasingly isolated not only from their communities, but from occupying multiple subject-positions. The idea of students as innocent obscures the multiple subject-positions that students do occupy. In the case of how South African students are represented, the 'innocence' of their violence serves the moral panic over post-apartheid law and order – a moral panic that is strikingly similar to those over 'black-on-black violence' in the apartheid years.

There is a similarity between how student violence is portrayed and how 'black-on-black' violence was portrayed in the apartheid years. Fair and Astroff (1991) comment on how the term 'black-on-black violence' was used to obscure the apartheid government's complicity in township violence (see also my discussion in chapter two). Portrayals of the violence exoticised its black participants, and the violence is therefore, by implication,

located in African savagery (Fair & Astroff, 1991). This is sustained in the way that the words 'tribal' and 'faction' are conflated in common news usage (Fair & Astroff, 1991). The idea that student violence is similar to 'black-on-black' violence supports the viewpoint that students act violently because of their innate savagery. Similarly, student violence is located in the savagery of their surroundings: and especially in teachers' savagery. There is a resonance with the idea of 'black-on-black' violence in the representation of teachers and schools as so chaotic as to induce students to violence.

In the above example, the teacher appears to have a chaotic personal life that impinges dramatically on her professional life. Instead of acting as custodian to the students, she brings violence to the school. This is a common feature of reports associating students with violence, where teachers are routinely represented as absent, negligent or criminal themselves. Reports of student delinquency often frame students' behaviour in terms of a reversal of the expected hierarchy of authority¹⁹. In 'Pupils beat principal' (see below) students stoned and beat their principal 'over the issue of teacher redeployment'. Unfortunately the report does not detail what it was about teacher redeployment that enraged students, but the article clearly represents a simplistic inversion of a clichéd student-teacher relationship. The idea of reversing the hierarchy of authority is more common in how teachers are frequently represented as being disciplined by the state.

PUPILS BEAT PRINCIPALS

Date: 21 Apr 1999

OVER 100 pupils from the Dumezweni Senior Secondary School near Umtata, Transkei have been arrested, after beating their principal nearly to death. Zuko Vundle was confronted by pupils over the issue of teacher redeployment, before they took to stoning him and beating him with sticks. They then held him hostage, along with other teachers, before police negotiator arrived. The pupils will be charged with kidnapping, assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm, and public violence, according to police spokesman Captain Mzukisi Fatyela.

Figure 12. 'Pupils beat principal' Mail&Guardian 21 April 1999.

¹⁹ See also 'Mpuma pupils fired on police' *Mail&Guardian* 31 May 2001 and 'Shock at pupil's assault of teacher' *Sowetan* 22 September 2000.

The focus on student vigilante action is an occasion to articulate a lack of authority or the need to impose authority. The representation of students as misguided and violent enables a narrative of burgeoning chaos and the decline of moral standards: savagery. Included in this is one of the implicit reasons for students' delinquency: teachers' lack of proper authority. Since the newspaper articles are set in black schools teachers' despotic behaviour, in a narrative familiar from colonial and apartheid discursive practice, is by implication an expression of their being black. The idea that student misconduct can be blamed on teachers is to some extent present in *Yizo Yizo* (Markgraaf, 2001). Here students' behaviour is linked to the calibre of the current principal. For instance, the student characters behave in more delinquent ways while the school is run by the gangsters' favourite, the weak Ken Mokoena, while they are shown as more responsible when the responsible Grace Letsedi takes over as principal. Also, it is clear that innovative teachers' classes run more smoothly and are less prone to outright chaos than those of dull, lazy teachers. However in *Yizo Yizo* a more complex relationship between student behaviour and teachers' leadership is expressed. For instance, the delinquency that marks Mokoena's period as principal is the result of his being unable to prevent gangsters dealing drugs in the school, rather than of his poor example.

Savage teachers

I remark earlier (and in the first chapter) on the dichotomy suggested between the *Yizo Yizo* (Markgraaf, 2001) characters the ex-principal Ken Mokoena and the new principal Grace Letsedi. While Ken Mokoena owes his all to the local gangsters, Grace is so inspiring as to be angelic. However, there is also some middle ground suggested in, for example, Mr Khumalo who uses corporal punishment but is a just and reliable figure of authority and is sympathetically portrayed as the love interest of one of the newer teachers. Similarly the principal who precedes Ken Mokoena, for instance, uses corporal punishment brutally, but the school is orderly and safe under his rule. Some teachers, for instance, are clearly lazy and uninspired, but also admit plaintively to being demoralised and to being frightened of the students. Similarly to the narrative in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, the teachers in *Yizo Yizo* get second chances: the frontier is permeable. In *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, the dichotomy of good and bad

teachers is translated in a before-and-after scenario where teachers are offered an opportunity to convert from being bad to being good. However, in the news accounts a far bleaker scenario is sketched out.

Teachers are very rarely referred to positively. My sample of over 110 reports where the headlines refer to teachers includes only 13 instances of the teaching profession being represented positively. Most of these positive reports are on teachers winning professional accolades²⁰. Most frequently news reports in which teachers figure cast them in a negative light – worthy of mention in this category is ‘Killer teacher – the warning signs’ (*Sowetan* 30 July 1999). There are three main themes to these negative reports. The first, largest group is of articles that refer to sexual misconduct²¹. The emphasis in these reports is sometimes on how teachers are disciplined for sexual misconduct, sometimes on how teachers are not disciplined for sexual misconduct, and sometimes on the prevalence of sexual assault. The second group of negative reports is on teacher committing exam fraud²². Here again the emphasis is on teachers being disciplined. Headlines such as ‘...teacher suspended’ (*Sowetan* 20 October 2000) and ‘Teachers to face court...’ (*Sowetan* 19 October 2000) place emphasis on the containment, the

²⁰ E.g. ‘Heidelberg teacher ‘our best at maths’’ *Sowetan* 19 October 2001, ‘Honours for top teachers’ *Sowetan* 25 October 2001, ‘Teachers go back to classes’ *Sowetan* 17 February 1998, ‘Teachers to back Asmal’s plan’ *Sowetan* 30 July 1999, ‘For the love of teaching others’ *Sowetan* 29 October 2001, ‘Teachers who light up classes’ *Sowetan* 31 October 2001, ‘Teachers to enjoy spotlight’ *Sowetan* October 4 2000, ‘Teacher wins coveted award’ *Sowetan* September 5 2000, ‘15 teachers honoured for excellent service’ *Sowetan* October 27 2000, ‘North West shines in national teacher awards’ *Sowetan* August 31 2000, ‘KwaThema principals hopeful’ *Sowetan* 20 October 2000, ‘Love for children inspires teacher’ *Business Day* 16 July 2000.

²¹ E.g. ‘Dept suspends teacher after rape charge’ *Sowetan* 12 October 2000, ‘Another rape claim against same teacher’ *Sowetan* 26 October 2000, ‘Teacher is arrested after boy (6) is sodomised’ *Sowetan* 25 August 2000, ‘“Accused must be barred from class”’ *Business Day* 3 October 1999, ‘Teacher sex clause worries parties’ *Business Day* 23 August 2000, ‘Teachers convicted of crimes are still on government’s payroll’ *Business Day* 14 November 2000, ‘Teacher charged with indecent assault’ *Mail&Guardian* 16 November 2001, ‘Teacher sentenced for molesting children’ *Mail&Guardian* 4 November 2001, ‘A crime is a crime is a crime’ *Mail&Guardian* 13 July 2001, ‘Sexual abuse rife in SA schools’ *Mail&Guardian* 22 January 2002, ‘Principal accused of sex abuse may teach again’ *Mail&Guardian* 15 June 2002, ‘11 teachers struck off the roll’ *Mail&Guardian* 26 June 2002, ‘Rape accused: more sex abuse claims’ *Mail&Guardian* 23 September 1999, ‘Asmal: School rape a national crisis’ *Mail&Guardian* 15 October 1999, ‘HIV-positive teacher allegedly rapes pupils, carries on teaching’ *Mail & Guardian* 18 September 2001, ‘Rape accused continues to teach’ *Mail&Guardian* 17 September 1999, ‘Rogue teachers to be disciplined’ *Mail&Guardian* 15 March 2002, ‘Teacher fired for sexual misconduct’ *Mail&Guardian* 6 December 1999.

disciplining, of the threat to disorder. The third group of articles casting teachers in a negative light deals with strikes²³. Both of the dominant tropes of savagery referred to in chapter two are apparent in how teachers are represented. I will deal first with teachers' representation as savage authority figures, and then with their being represented as engaged in mass action.

The trope of savage authority is reiterated in the portrayal of teachers as despotic authorities who create a savage order. Headlines like 'Teacher is suspended after pupil is raped in library' (*Sowetan* 25 October 2000), 'Teacher made pupils eat mucus' (*Sowetan* 29 October 2001) and 'HIV-positive teacher allegedly rapes pupils, carries on teaching' (*Mail&Guardian* 28 September 2001) create a sense of schools as horrific places. The idea of despotic authority is especially apparent in articles on corporal punishment²⁴.

I do not mean to suggest here that students do not riot, that teachers do not sexually abuse students or continue to use corporal punishment. Nor do I wish to suggest that the state does not effect positive change. I am concerned with how these characterisations are used, and my concern is exactly that the very real problems in schools are not addressed effectively because of how they are understood. Describing the problems in schools in the reductive and fundamentally racist terms generated in colonial and apartheid discursive practice is not adequate to the problems in schools. In a narrative that relies on the tropes of savagery delinquency is the result of race.

²² E.g. 'Teachers, driver in court over exam leak' *Sowetan* 24 October 2000, 'Teacher to face court over leaked exam paper' *Sowetan* 20 October 2000, 'Biology paper leaked: teacher suspended' *Sowetan* 19 October 2000, 'Seven held after exam paper leak' *Business Day* 19 October 2000.

²³ E.g. 'Looming teacher strike threatens examinations' *Sowetan* 5 October 2001, 'SA cannot afford teachers' strike' *Sowetan* 5 October 2001, 'Teachers protest at Pace College' *Sowetan* 13 September 1999, 'Teachers' strike could play havoc with exams' *Business Day* 28 September 2001, 'Children left unattended in schools' *Business Day* 17 August 2000, 'Children to pay the price for teachers strike' *Mail&Guardian* 4 October 2001, 'Strike causes education 'black-out'' *Mail&Guardian* 30 July 1999, 'Teachers mull strike ahead of matric exams' *Mail&Guardian* 1 October 2001, 'SA needs teachers devoted to teaching' *Mail&Guardian* 30 July 1999.

²⁴ E.g. 'Teacher, boyfriend held over torture' *Sowetan* 29 October 2001, 'Teacher made pupils eat mucus' *Sowetan* 29 October 2001, 'Petition against teacher' *Sowetan* 3 October 1997, 'Family to sue over beating' *Mail&Guardian*, 30 March 2001, 'Corporal punishment for failing to cough up' *Mail&Guardian* 20 October 2000 'Principal faces sacking after student-abuse claims' (*Mail&Guardian* 27 October 2000).

Teachers are also sometimes depicted simply as inadequate. They are sometimes portrayed as victims. In this representation it is pointed out that they are poorly paid²⁵ and under-qualified²⁶ due to being disadvantaged under the apartheid system. More commonly though, the portrayal of teachers as victims involves their being harmed physically²⁷, although they are very occasionally portrayed as victims in their relationship with the state²⁸. In this, teachers' failure to effectively exercise authority is located, to some extent, outside of their control: they are victims of circumstance. The overall effect of such representations, especially given the portrayals in which teachers are criminal and depraved, is not sympathetic. Instead teachers seem fundamentally incapable of discharging their duties.

Teachers' professionalism is routinely undermined in their representation as a striking mass. It is an established feature of South African discursive practice that a workerist mode of interaction is placed in opposition to professionalism (Chisholm, 1999). In addition, as I have discussed in chapter two, industrial action was strongly associated in apartheid discursive practice with savagery. Industrial action continues to signify in the contemporary newspaper accounts analysed here as it did in the apartheid discursive practices discussed in chapter two. When teachers are referred to as striking, the emphasis is on students not being educated, rather than on the reasons for the strike. These reports are often framed in terms of exam proximity. To some extent this tendency can be

²⁵ 'Weary teachers just want their payments' *Sowetan* 31 October 1997, 'Retrenched teachers face financial ruin' *Sowetan* 31 October 1997, 'Province may have to prune teachers' *Sowetan* 25 February 1998, 'Teachers are important' *Mail&Guardian* 9 June 2000, 'Teacher's prayers answered by Lotto' *Sowetan*, 20 October 2000, 'Teachers need a better deal' *Sowetan* 9 October 2000

²⁶ 'Quit bashing teachers' *Mail&Guardian* 28 July 2000, 'Teachers fail Curriculum 2005' *Mail&Guardian* 4 June 1999, 'Let qualified teachers come back into the system' *Mail&Guardian* 9 November 2001, 'Obsolete tools need upgrading' *Business Day* October 30 2000, '25% of primary school teachers under-qualified' *Mail&Guardian* 21 July 2000, 'Turning teachers into authors' *Mail&Guardian* 14 September 2001

²⁷ 'Teachers, pupils counselled' *Sowetan* 1 September 1999, '8 teachers hurt in crash' *Sowetan* 15 August 2000, 'Teacher shot in N-Prov shebeen' *Mail&Guardian* 19 August 2001, 'Teacher shot dead in front of pupils' *Sowetan* 16 August 2000, 'Soweto principal slain' *Sowetan* 26 October 2000, 'Jilted boyfriend murders teachers' *Sowetan* 29 September 2000, 'Three teachers killed by colleague' *Mail&Guardian* 29 July 1999, 'Teacher shot and killed in classroom' *Sowetan* 10 June 1999.

²⁸ 'Teacher crisis hits school' *Sowetan* 17 February 1998, 'Headmaster in hot water' *Sowetan* 2 February 1998, 'Teacher under fire' *Sowetan* 27 September 1997, 'North West's surplus teachers vie for posts' *Sowetan* 19 July 1999, 'Just send letter – govt' *Mail&Guardian* 4 November 1999, 'Admin error sees teachers not paid' *Mail&Guardian* 16 August 1999, 'Asmal tells teachers to hang in there' *Mail&Guardian* 19 April 2002, 'Teachers left out in rethink of curriculum' *Business Day* 2 June 2000.

explained as part of a more general tendency to portray industrial action negatively (MMP, in HRC 1999). The effect of shifting emphasis from the reasons for the strike onto teachers' failure in their role as teachers is to present both teachers and strike negatively. In striking teachers are represented in dereliction not only of their duty to students, but in dereliction of their professional identity. That teachers' industrial action is represented as savage is further borne out by how it occasions the state's assertion of modernity. While articles on teacher strikes also sometimes portray the relationship between teachers and the state in a neutral light²⁹, more frequently the relationship between teachers and the state is portrayed as antagonistic and confrontational. In this relationship teacher unions are portrayed as the aggressors³⁰ and the state's role is to discipline teachers' unruly behaviour³¹. I will return to this point later in the chapter when I discuss the significance of the punitive scenes in the articles.

The press focus on teachers emphasises a narrative where teachers are inadequate role models. Teachers are irresponsible in their strikes, they are debauched rather than professional, and they undermine the examination system not only by striking but also by leaking exam papers. Even where they are not wilfully under-performing, they are under-qualified, uncomprehending of curriculum changes and victims of violence on school grounds. Most damning of all is that they are often revealed as sexual predators. In short, they are as unworthy of custodianship of the nation's children as they are unable to foster a culture of learning and teaching.

The above analysis suggests that schools feature in news articles only as spaces for the demonstration of savagery. However, the narratives of savagery that teachers and students feature in are also narratives of the state's assertion of modernity.

²⁹ 'Asmal, teachers discuss policy' *Business Day* 21 May 2002, 'Teachers' agreement soon to be complete' *Mail&Guardian* 1 September 1998, 'Strike looms as late-night talks fail' *Mail&Guardian* 8 June 1998.

³⁰ 'Cosatu rejects Asmal's call to exempt teachers from stayaway' *Business Day* 25 July 2002, 'Nehawu rejects implementation' *Mail&Guardian* 17 August 1999, 'Unions: No to wage trade-off' *Mail&Guardian* 12 October 2001.

³¹ 'Asmal lays down the law for school strikes' *Business Day* 31 March 2000, 'Teachers' unions say they do not like Asmal's lessons' *Business Day* 18 May 2000, 'Government puts its foot down on pay deal' *Mail&Guardian* 12 October 2001.

This negative characterisation of teachers enables a narrative in which the state is really in charge. For instance in ‘Rampage school pupils reprimanded’ (*Sowetan* 18 August 2000) and in ‘Pupils rampage over suicide’ (*Sowetan* 15 August 2000) department officials’ voices are privileged over teachers who are not quoted³².

Gauteng department of education spokesman Mr Lebelo Maloka said the department would investigate the matter,... “We condemn violence as a means of showing dissatisfaction, anger or trauma over the loss of a loved one in the strongest terms. We call for calm so that we can show respect for the dead boy.” (‘Pupils rampage over suicide’ *Sowetan* 15 August 2000)

In articles dealing with the everyday business of teaching, the state, rather than the teacher, is active³³. This is formalised in articles describing the relationship between the state and the Congress of South African Students (Cosas)³⁴. In ‘Asmal cracks down on Cosas’ (*Mail&Guardian* 2 June 2000) there is no mention of teachers except for the following four instances in the 28 paragraph-long article:

The organisation is accused of intimidation after its members coerced students at gunpoint to join a protest march against a school *principal* it accused of financial mismanagement. (par 21, my emphasis)

North West Deputy Director General Dr Anis Mahomed Kadoria said: “The volatile situation [in schools] has the potential of threatening human life and compromises the safety of the community, learners and *educators*.” (par 22, my emphasis)

In one incident a student drew a firearm on a *teacher* who had questioned why the student was not wearing a uniform. Many schools in Alexandra and Kwa-Thema are reported to be run by gun-toting youths, and that *teachers* are hostages of their students. (par 25, my emphasis)

Teachers feature only as among the objects of student violence. In focusing on the formal relationship between students and the state, the more inchoate and pervasive relationship that is enacted by teachers, on behalf of the state, in the classroom is elided. This severely undermines fostering a culture of learning and teaching as it places the emphasis outside the school.

³² Other examples are ‘Gumba ends in tragedy’ *Sowetan* 8 August 2000, ‘Use proper grievance channels, pupils told’ *Business Day* 1 June 2000 ‘Enraged pupils stone abductors to death’ *Mail&Guardian* 21 August 2000, and ‘Mpuma pupils fired on police’ *Mail&Guardian* 31 May 2001. The state is also represented by police officers, as in ‘Angry pupils stone Putco bus’ *Sowetan* 18 August 2000, ‘Pupils rampage after teacher is shot dead’ *Business Day* 20 August 2000, ‘MEC sees growing trend of lynch-mob tactics in schools’ *Business Day* 18 August 2000.

³³ E.g. ‘On your marks, get set for matric exams’ *Sowetan* 28 September 2000, ‘Exams must stay on track – Asmal’ *Sowetan* 13 October 2000, ‘Shortage of black maths students worries Asmal’ *Sowetan* 22 September 2000.

³⁴ E.g. ‘Stand and deliver us from hell’ *Business Day* 13 May 2000, ‘Asmal cracks down on Cosas’ *Mail&Guardian* 2 June 2000.

In reports on school disruption being the occasions for a narrative of the assertion of modernity, the school is invoked as a frontier between savagery and modernity: a space where the 'battle' against savagery can be and is fought. This reading is supported in how the physical school space is commonly portrayed in news reports.

School as frontier

As in colonial and apartheid discursive practices, in contemporary news accounts the school space is represented as the frontier between savagery and modernity, where instituting discipline stands for civilising savagery. Although this is sometimes expressed in criticism of the state's lack of efficiency in ordering or disciplining schools, it is mostly expressed in terms of how the state asserts modernity in the face of teachers' and students' anachronistic savagery. Although in a very few articles the school is presented as positively this is usually in terms of the school's transformation, and especially the school's modernisation³⁵. Articles that focus on the space of the school depict this space in terms of conflict³⁶ or in terms of emergency situations such as hunger or endemic crime³⁷. As evident in the majority of the articles discussed in this chapter, schools are often evoked as spaces where crime and punishment are played out.

³⁵ E.g. 'Vryburg school to be transformed' *Sowetan* 2 July 1999, 'School maths video link-up' *Sowetan* 23 October 2001, 'Farm school gets funding' *Sowetan* 20 March 1996, 'Millions for online schools of Gauteng' *Sowetan* 1 October 2001, 'Gauteng, KZN schools tops' *Sowetan* 2 October 1997, 'Schools aim to produce top results' *Sowetan* 20 February 1998.

³⁶ E.g. 'The school of tears' *Sowetan* 30 July 1999, 'Violence in schools increasing' *Sowetan* 19 July 1999, 'Pietersberg school retracts racist decision' *Sowetan* 26 October 2001, 'Community demands a school' *Sowetan* 29 October 2001, 'School outing turns sour as pupil and guide drown' *Sowetan* 10 October 2001, 'School saga instructive' *Sowetan* 1 March 1996, 'Alleged racism at school to be probed' *Sowetan* 21 October 1997, 'School plans better security' *Sowetan* 2 February 1998, 'Itumeleng an unhappy school' *Sowetan* 13 February 1998, 'Kwa-Thema schools are disrupted' *Sowetan* 5 February 1998, 'Rebels lose court battle over school' *Sowetan* 20 March 1996, 'Thieves hit two Pretoria schools' *Sowetan* 11 October 2001, 'Schools most affected by civil sector strike' *Sowetan* 30 July 1999, 'Govt steps in to save struggling school' *Sowetan* 3 October 2000, 'Five schools closed after protests' *Business Day* 29 May 2000, 'Gangs terrorise Cape schools' *Mail&Guardian* 18 August 1995, 'Places of safety really places of danger' *Mail&Guardian* 27 September 1996.

³⁷ E.g. 'Sweating it out at tree school' *Sowetan* 13 October 1998, 'Orange Farm school lack basic resources' *Sowetan* 26 February 1998, 'Schools budget cut' *Sowetan* 27 October 1997, 'Thieves hit school as cops lecture pupils' *Sowetan* 22 August 2000, 'No hunger at Banareng Primary' *Sowetan* 13 October 2000, 'Special school robbed once again' *Sowetan* 18 September 2000, 'Schools throw out pregnant teens' *Mail&Guardian* 10 August 2001.

School disorder is sometimes explained as a lack of physical and human resources. For instance, professional youth workers who also locate the violence in a lack of faith in authority, stress the frustrations of inadequate financial and community resources ('Stand and deliver us from hell' *Business Day* 13 May 2000)³⁸. This is not a dominant explanation for school disruption. It is, however, a very common *expression* of school disorder. Along with learner disruption, a derelict school space is very frequently how school order is described as manifest³⁹. For instance, education minister Asmal

laments the high grass, which he says makes young girls susceptible to rape...He also expresses unhappiness about the unhygienic state of the toilets. ('Principals face tough inspection' *Business Day* 21 January 2002, par 12)

This concern with the school space is also a response to the imperative of modernising. In Fuller's (1991) study, he finds that developing states are obligated for a number of reasons to pursue modernising schools. Given a lack of resources, modernising is usually signified not so much in the re-evaluation of human resources, but in paying meticulous attention to school buildings and grounds. In the following examples the transition from the apartheid state to the democratic state is described as modernising, and located in more hospitable physical surroundings.

'Secondary abuse' can take many forms. It can be formal and systematic – the 'control and punishment' approach of most institutions, where there are too few staff who are badly paid and under-trained... Many [children] live in run-down buildings, where they sleep under soiled sheets and too-few blankets alongside reeking toilets... There are open toilets in the dormitories; the girls are routinely tested for HIV without their consent... "[S]anitary conditions are unacceptable. The ablution block has broken windows, broken wash basins and broken taps. Human excrement was found on the floors and in the showers... a result of too few toilets available at any time...A lack of paper seems to lead to... children having to use their clothing to clean themselves"... "The eight girls in this facility sit on a bench all day under the watchful eye of a security officer, who also accompanies them to the toilet." ('Places of safety really places of danger', *Mail&Guardian*, 27 September 1996, par 4)

This example describes conditions in 'places of safety' for children who have been identified as at risk of physical or sexual abuse. These institutions sometimes coincide with the reformatory and industrial schools that I discussed in the previous chapter (See

³⁸ See also 'Youth Day... education wobbles in the new era' *Business Day* 18 June 2000, 'When things fall apart' *Mail&Guardian* 31 May 2002.

³⁹ For instance 'What ails our rural schools' *Sowetan* 5 October 2000, 'Principals face tough inspection' *Business Day* 21 January 2002, 'Many SA schools lack water, sanitation' *Mail&Guardian* 17 August 2001, 'School in a place of war' *Mail&Guardian* 8 October 1999.

Chisholm, 1989). The appalling conditions are associated in the above report with a punitive disciplinary system that relies on surveillance. Roos' 'modern' system of discipline, his apartheid-style reforms, are shown here to be barbaric. Similarly, although a less appalling account, the beautiful and luxurious spaces described in the following report on a private school are associated later in the article with a system of school control that relies, very successfully, on self-discipline.

The toilets for students and teachers have marble checked floors with gold framed windows that gives a whole new meaning to using the 'throne'. . . At the government school I attended, the 'canteen' was a person selling homemade chips over the fence. Our sports ground doubled as the playground – it would be used as the soccer or rugby field, or for assembly, depending on what you needed it to be. Students were disciplined by being caned and detention was a popular form of punishment. ('Goodbye Mr Chips, hello Nino's', *Mail&Guardian*, 20 April 2000, par 5 & 26)

Apartheid schooling is characterised in the above example simultaneously by poor physical resources and authoritarian discipline. However, the transition to the democratic state is sometimes represented as a move towards stricter discipline – although this move is still associated with better facilities.

Gauteng MEC for education Ignatius Jacobs believes the best way to judge a school is to go into the pupils' changing rooms. If they are clean and equipped with toilet paper, soap and towels, the school can be assumed to have positive discipline, a caring staff and self-respecting student body ('Reading, writing and tuckshops', *Business Day*, 5 March 2001, par 1).

Where schools are associated with crime, better facilities are understood to be instrumental in crime reduction.

Physical upkeep of school buildings played an important part in crime prevention, especially rape. Long grass, toilets without locks and deserted pathways created danger... Restricted access also prevented crime. The national policy document on the control of access to all schools was being finalised and the department's campaign to ensure all school premises were ringed with fences would cost "hundreds and thousands of rands". ('Making schools happier places' *Business Day*, 5 February 2001, par 10 - 11)

The fact that toilets feature so prominently in articles on the school space can perhaps be accounted for in the colonial importance of hygiene as signifying civilisation, and the stress laid in South Africa on teaching hygiene as part of modernising reforms. For instance, there is a resonance here with the colonial soap advertisements, where soap keeps 'the imperial body clean and pure in the racially polluted contact zones' (Hall, 1997). The school space physically pushes into savage (and dirty) lands, marking out a fenced frontier.

The school may also be considered as representing the temporal frontier between savagery (or tradition) as an idea of the past and modernity as an idea of the future. The metaphysical space of the school, the idea of educating, of teachers, of students, is also an occasion for positioning discursively with regard to modernity, tradition and savagery, with regard to the future and the past.

Leaving aside the fact that student delinquency is situated almost wholly only in rioting, it is interesting to examine the ways in which their 'mass action' is accounted for. The idea that student delinquency is mob-like presents a number of implicit explanations. First, their delinquency is related to the student protests of the 1970s and 1980s. Second, student delinquency is related to poor conditions in schools: to teachers' inadequacy or brutality, and sometimes even to the disrepair of school buildings. Neither the relationship between contemporary student protests and apartheid protests nor the relationship between student delinquency and poor school conditions is expanded on in any detail. In this, student delinquency is a sign of general chaotic conditions.

The idea of the student mob is one that is closely associated both historically and in contemporary discourse with savagery. This means that in the absence of any more complex association between delinquency and apartheid protests, or between delinquency and poor school conditions, and because the powerful trope of the savage crowd is invoked, student delinquency is implicitly located in their savage nature. This is to some extent a statement about students' relationship to the past. Since the frontier between savagery and modernity is a temporal one, implying students' savagery is a statement about their relationship to the past. This explanation posits students' actions as anachronistic and archaic. Jenkins (1998) comments on how childhood is posited both as a link to 'the past', and as an imperative to 'the future' in political rhetoric. In the news reports analysed here students' actions are represented as the reoccurrence of the past: to some extent schools are presented as haunted by the past.

The idea that students are somehow out of time, less than modern, is supported in the few direct references in the articles reviewed here to explanations for students' actions. In these students actions are located in the past in a number of ways. The most prominent is that they behave according to norms established in the late 70s and the 80s. Education minister Kader Asmal is quoted as saying "pupils are stuck in the bad habit of taking the law into their own hands" ('Stand and deliver us from hell' *Business Day* 13 May 2000, par 5). They are described as having acquired this habit in during apartheid when "this mid-80s mindset did not accept the legitimacy of authority" (par 6). Locating present-day student behaviour in apartheid highlights how inappropriate it is:

In a democracy, grievances should be pursued according to procedure, even where there were obstacles.
(par 6)

Students' actions are seen here as articulations of "old anger" (par 28). Student behaviour is equated with protests against apartheid.

This time the focus of the anger is not on a white minority Afrikaner government, but on the new black majority government, including many of those who led the original "struggle". ('Youth Day... education wobbles in the new era' *Business Day* 18 June 2000)

This has been described as a 'culture of entitlement' ('When things fall apart' *Mail&Guardian* 31 May 2002, par 3). Asmal also describes this as in a very catchy way as the 'toy-toyi'⁴⁰ habit'. In this explanation students are described as not wholly occupying the modern. Their discourse disrupts the democratic resent with its insistence on framing events in terms of oppressed and oppressor. Students are accused of operating in an apartheid discourse of order, but in understanding their actions in terms of apartheid, this explanation itself insists on an apartheid order of things. Students' 'savagery' strikes a false note in the modern democratic present. However, it does so in a workerist framework. Students' actions are delegitimised by ascribing them to a hysterical mass.

Students' actions are also located in the past by attributing them to a 'culture of violence'. Asmal, for instance, is quoted as saying that "our children come from a very brutal background" (par 6). This statement is somewhat ambiguous: Asmal refers to the

⁴⁰ *Toy-toyi* refers to a rhythmic dancing movement commonly used in marches or at political demonstrations.

environment in which children grow up, but he is also referring to the brutality of the apartheid past. In this corollary of the 'toyi-toyi habit' explanation, students are described as traumatised by their exposure to violence, and their exposure to history. School disruptions are associated with sociological factors such as political and domestic violence and corporal punishment ('Asmal urges society to listen more to pupils' *Business Day* 29 August 2000, par 5). As discussed in the previous chapter, there is an established tendency of understanding sociological conditions as the result of race, rather than of racism. Although the 'brutal background' explanation draws on seeing apartheid as savage, it also resonates directly with the idea of African custom as savage. Here there is a similarity with apartheid discourse where civil protest was discounted as the result of poverty and crowded conditions, which, in turn, are understood as the result of race rather than racial oppression.

Some commentators, however, view students' relationship as problematic to the past in that they are too modern. For instance, Minister Tshwete is quoted as explaining the pervasive violence in schools with the statement that "children are no longer children" (*Business Day*, 29 August 2000). Similarly, Asmal is quoted as associating what he describes as the collapse of the family with moral degeneracy in schools and in society in general.

Asmal said the black African family, which had provided the chemistry of social cohesion "for a very long time indeed", had collapsed as a result of urban migration and influx control during the apartheid years. the pervasive authority of kinship had also declined over 200 years. ('Education can lead moral regeneration' *Business Day* 21 September 2000)

In this explanation school disruption is located in there not being enough tradition. This is related to the implicit explanation that students misbehave because teachers are not proper authorities. For instance, Minister Tshwete's statement about children is evidenced in the breakdown of authority.

Children are no longer children. They will not listen to their parents and even their teachers. Once scolded for misbehaviour, some will either commit suicide or desert home.

In failing as proper authorities teachers reverse the hierarchy of authority, and break down social structures as "when teachers compete with pupils for girlfriends" ('Asmal

urges society to listen more to pupils' *Business Day* 29 August 2000, par 11). Kader Asmal's statement of intent regarding teachers' authority recalls an idea of the past.

I want to take teaching back to the time when teachers were pre-eminent residents of every village and where schools were considered as hallowed as the churches, back to the time when education was revered and the educated were respected, when teachers were honoured with girls crossing their legs in class and boys swallowing their cigarettes at the mere sight of a teacher, [Asmal] said. (*Business Day*, 21 February 2000)

Tradition is invoked here, unproblematically, as benign and as associated with moral and social order. Asmal posits a different time in his invocation of tradition to in his invocation of savagery: further back.

This is similar in 'What ails our rural schools' (*Sowetan*, 5 October 2000). The writer, Ramogale, distinguishes between the more distant past of his education and the extreme climate in schools in the 1980s – what he refers to as the 'struggle tactic of ungovernability'.

[W]e went to these schools in a different era. I can clearly recall that the learning environment then was not, in spite of financial scarcity and the harsh rule of apartheid ideologues, as desolate as it is today... For us then excellence had an important political implication; it was a blow for freedom, an act of struggle. We – pupils and teachers – worked and sought to excel because to do so meant to contribute meaningfully to the failure of apartheid's grand design: the oppression of blacks through the exponential expansion of mediocrity. Because we resisted the idea that we were to be "drawers of water and hewers of wood", we sought to go beyond just passing. When I think of my experiences as a pupil and the passion that went into the learning and teaching process, I now realise that the environment we were exposed to sought to develop particular character traits in us: persistence, self-discipline, moral courage, resourcefulness, and so on... With the advent of 'ungovernability' as a struggle tactic, the scholastic character of my era was superseded by a new revolutionary character – defiant, undisciplined, angry. (paras 12- 16)

Here the tradition that needs to be reinvoked is the 'discipline' of the struggle against apartheid. The discipline of excellence is related to privations – it seems similar in this respect to the 'strict' discipline that is called for in articles on teachers becoming police reservists, or the 'strictness' sometimes associated with Kader Asmal. In other words there is something here of the shame of punishment, the shame of disciplining. This is borne out in how Ramogale links striving for excellence with cleansing oneself:

To get closer to God, it is believed, one ought to cleanse oneself of impurities, whether these be arrogance, slothfulness, or a negative mindset. For the Jew or Christian, worthwhile living involves permanent struggle against vileness in all its dimensions.

However, Ramogale is unusual in that he invokes multiple pasts, and in that he articulates them with each other. He is especially unusual in that he also reconciles these ideas of the past with a vision of the future. He suggests that, where before students were motivated by racial pride, by proving themselves to be better than Verwoerd's 'hewers of wood and drawers of water', now they should be motivated by national pride.

From Africa, thanks to Steve Biko's insights, we have come to know that a nation that has no self-love and self-pride cannot rise above ordinariness. Happy is the nation that respects itself, Biko has taught us, for it will be respected by others; blessed is the nation of proud people, for it will not accept mediocrity as its lot.

Ramogale suggests that racial identity should be superseded by national identity.

This article is strongly situated in an apartheid discourse where disorder is rural, and where mass action is an expression of chaos. However, mass action is also an expression of power: it is acknowledged as a legitimate part of a legitimate struggle. Although Ramogale reiterates the theme that student disruption must be understood as an empty repetition of apartheid protest, there is an interesting shift in this article away from the binary opposition of tradition and modernity.

Punitive scenes

The stories of teachers' and students' savagery are illustrations of punishment and are in themselves occasions for the state's assertion of control (and modernity) through acts of discipline. The articles where teachers savagely punish students, where students enact vigilante justice and where the state disciplines teachers, and where students savagely punish present what Foucault has referred to as 'punitive scenes', which together constitute a 'complex of signs'⁴¹. The punitive scenes in the articles reviewed here bring into currency savagery, modernity (in punishment and discipline) education and race.

⁴¹ Foucault has described this process as 'punitive scenes that established [couplings of crime-punishment] or reinforced them in the eyes of all, a discourse that is circulated, [bringing] back into currency at each moment the complex of signs' (1977, p.128).

In terms of scenes of punishment, corporal punishment is especially significant of savagery. In ‘Corporal punishment for failing to cough up’ (*Mail&Guardian*, 20 October 2000) the story is of a principal at a North West school who beats students for refusing to donate money towards a teacher’s salary. In ‘Family to sue over beating’ a particularly brutal beating is described:

Seale says her child’s eye was “literally hanging out” after a teacher allegedly lashed her on the face with a thick stick. The stick broke and some pieces gouged her eye and left her bleeding profusely, says Seale. ((*Mail&Guardian*, 30 March 2001, par 3)

The stories of teachers’ savage authority are occasions for the state’s proper authority in that they are also often stories of how teachers are disciplined by the state⁴². In ‘MEC lashes out at ‘disgraceful teachers’’ (*Sowetan* 28 August 2000), a provincial MEC addresses educators at the opening of the Professional Educators’ Union annual conference describes teachers in the following ways:

“The kind of teachers we have today have no respect for time. They arrive late and are the first to knock off...They are the kind of teachers who risk their reputations by arriving at class unprepared, only to be exposed as ‘empty vessels’ by bright students,” Mushwana told teachers.

He said there were teachers who preferred to avoid hangovers by staying drunk throughout their careers...Mushwana said Northern Province was full of teachers who thrived under anarchy, disorder and general lawlessness. (paras 5-7, 9, 11)

In confrontations with unions and striking workers Asmal and the education department are portrayed as harbingers of discipline. In ‘Ex-teacher Asmal hauls out ruler’ (*Mail&Guardian* 16 July 1999) the headline constructs the state as disciplinarian, invoking an image of Asmal administering corporal punishment with his ruler⁴³. In other examples, mentioned earlier in this chapter, Asmal ‘tames’⁴⁴, ‘expels’⁴⁵, ‘gets tough’,

⁴² E.g. ‘MEC lashes out at ‘disgraceful teachers’ *Sowetan* 28 August 2000, ‘Asmal lays down the law for school strikes’ *Business Day* 31 March 2000, ‘Teachers’ unions say they do not like Asmal’s lessons’ *Business Day* 18 May 2000, ‘Asmal wags his finger at educators’ *Business Day* 21 February 2000, ‘Asmal warns errant teachers of tough bill’ *Business Day* 15 May 2000 ‘The real matric failures’ *Mail&Guardian* 9 January 1998, ‘Sticks and carrots for schools’ *Mail&Guardian* 28 April 2000, ‘Asmal warns provinces to get in line’ *Mail&Guardian* 21 September 2001, ‘Government puts its foot down on pay deal’ *Mail&Guardian* 12 October 2001, ‘Ex-teacher Asmal hauls out the ruler’ *Mail&Guardian* 16 July 1999, ‘Mbeki slams behaviour of teachers’ *Mail&Guardian* 7 September 1998.

⁴³ However in the article itself the metaphor of the ruler is employed in the sense of assessing, or ‘measuring’ what needs to be done.

The time for hauling out the ruler to make some crude measurements, then getting down to the serious business of fixing things is long overdue. (par 6)

⁴⁴ ‘Asmal wags his finger at educators’ *Business Day* 21 February 2000

⁴⁵ ‘Asmal warns errant teachers of tough bill’ (*Business Day*, 15 May 2000)

‘warns errant teachers’⁴⁶ and ‘lays down the law’⁴⁷. In ‘Mbeki slams behaviour of teachers’ President Mbeki is reported to have rebuked teachers for “toy-toying⁴⁸ and drunkenness, and urged them to be dedicated to their profession” (*Mail&Guardian* 7 September 1998, par 1). In ‘Asmal wags his finger at educators’ teachers are likened to animals in need of correction

Worse still [, Asmal said,] some balaclava-clad teachers drove non-striking teachers and learners out of schools. They must be tamed, he told delegates. (‘Asmal wags his finger at educators’ *Business Day*, 21 February 2000).

In ‘Asmal lays down the law for school strikes’ Asmal is reported as “promising to get tough on undisciplined and unprofessional teachers” by gazetting “regulations for principals to follow before embarking on strike action” (*Business Day*, 31 March 2000)⁴⁹. In all these accounts state authority figures counter teachers’ savage lack of professionalism with modern discipline and law.

These reports present an account in which the state is the vehicle of modernity, imposing order over the industrialised savagery of mass action. This is expressed especially in the emphasis given to how the state insists not only on ‘law and order’ but also on efficiency and productivity⁵⁰. In ‘Teachers urged to become police reservists’ (*Business Day* 30 May 2000) and ‘Asmal tells teachers to blow whistles on crimes’ (*Business Day* 29 May 2001) teachers are enlisted into penal order – and so school discipline is framed as crime control. Teachers will maintain order by becoming officers of the law. In the first article, education minister Asmal condemns student violence in schools and calls on teachers to become police reservists “to enable them to arrest people at school crime scenes”.

The minister said violent “skelms” [crooks] had no place in society and teachers should report law-breaking pupils to the police at once or, even better, join the SA Police Service as reservists. (‘Teachers urged to become police reservists’ *Business Day* 30 May 2000, para. 4)

In the second article Asmal is quoted as encouraging teachers to report other teachers if they are suspected of crimes like corporal punishment and sexual abuse.

⁴⁶ ‘Asmal warns errant teachers of tough bill’ (*Business Day*, 15 May 2000)

⁴⁷ ‘Asmal lays down the law for school strikes’, *Business Day* 31 March 2000.

⁴⁸ *Toy-toyi* refers to a rhythmic dancing movement commonly used in marches or at demonstrations.

⁴⁹ See also ‘Teachers’ unions say they do not like Asmal’s lessons’ *Business Day* 18 May 2000.

“I have always subscribed to whistle-blowing. We are talking about 28 000 (public) schools. Without whistle-blowing, law-breaking will continue.” Asmal was speaking at a ceremony to appoint ...the first chairman of the council... formed to develop and enforce a code of ethics and maintain professional standards in teaching...

Asmal said education of real quality called for teachers of real quality, with the courage to do right. Teachers needed to instil values and morals. (‘Asmal tells teachers to blow whistle on crimes’ *Business Day* 29 May 2001, paras 2-3, 6)

This idea that teachers are to instill values and morals through arresting students and reporting their colleagues is disturbing. However, the issue is presented as one of management. If teachers were police reservists, disorder in schools could be managed far more efficiently and productively: as modern institutions.

Government would not tolerate this [violent] behaviour [on the parts of learners], Asmal said. He urged organisers and inspectors to “perform their duties”. School inspectors or district managers as they are now known should provide listening ears and put out fires if necessary, he said.

There is a sense in the minister’s statements that if everyone did their job properly outbreaks of violence would not occur. By telling us that school inspectors are now district managers, teachers becoming police reservists is framed in terms of a management, rather than a school ethos, issue. It is a matter of deploying resources properly: like the teacher training colleges and old army building standing empty that must be used (par 16-17).

The theme of buildings is articulated again here with a discourse of modernisation. The idea of efficiency, as a way of signalling modernity, is presented as part of the post-apartheid transition. Here the post-apartheid transition is defined as a transition to modernity. However, the idea of ‘efficiency’, the discourse of development, is familiar from apartheid discursive practice. To some extent this may be attributed to the shifting meaning of modernity in South African discourse: like tradition, modernity is a less than specific signifier. However, in that modernity is always presented as an evolution, and, so, as a movement into the future as against the less developed past, there is always implicit in the evocation of modernity a savagery. In South Africa, this is extremely problematic in terms of race. Here ‘modernity’ has always been associated with the production of race, and its efficiency has always been the efficiency of controlling black ‘delinquency’. In this narrative of modernity as saving grace, order is a smoothly running

⁵⁰ E.g. ‘Children left unattended in schools’ *Business Day*, 17 August 2001, ‘Teachers’ strike could play havoc with exams’ *Business Day* 28 September 2001, ‘Teachers may not apply for sick leave to teach overseas’ *Business Day* 11 June 2002.

business, a question of asset management, and, as in 'Obsolete tools need upgrading' (*Business Day*, 30 October 2000), teachers are 'obsolete tools' that 'need upgrading' if a skilled workforce is to be created. However, the question remains whether in this redefinition of what modernity means, savagery has been disassociated from being African.

The state is defined as modern against a definition of teachers and students as emblematic of savagery, and the school becomes emblematic of an arena where modernity can be asserted. The illustration below is an example.



Figure 13. 'Minister of Education Kader Asmal addresses pupils and teachers...' Sowetan, 10 October 2000, p.4.

Asmal is portrayed in the foreground, looking calm and serious, as he addresses orderly rows of neatly uniformed students in a community in which three boys were tortured and set alight by a local businessman. The scene signifies the imposition of modern order in the face of savage human rights abuse.

The kind of punishment and order that is associated with Asmal in particular and with the state more generally is set against savage punishment of the kinds mentioned above, but

also as is exemplified in the following article. In ‘Angry youth poisoned his parents’ (*Mail&Guardian*, 13 December 1996) there are four scenes of punishment laid out. In the first in this story set in a rural black residential area, a father punishes his son for not attending school and for coming home late by beating him. In the second, the son punishes the father for the beatings by poisoning him (and, accidentally, his boy’s mother). In the third scene of punishment, the community punishes the son for the murders by ostracising him and they threaten to kill him. Finally, the police begin the process of legitimate state-sanctioned punishment by apprehending the boy, opening murder charges and conducting an investigation. The last punishment scene - and the only one that is legitimate – is de-emphasised in the story. Although there is reference to the police in the fourth paragraph, the focus of the sentence is on their role as protectors, not as punishers.

Police say they are keeping the suspect in custody for his own protection following death threats – some even from his own family. (par4)

The emphasis here is on the savagery of the boy being beaten, of the boy’s retaliation and of the possibility of the community’s vigilante action. The school, although peripheral to the way the story is marketed, is an important feature in that the school is the setting for the exposition of all this savagery. In the logic of the text the school suggests the frontier.

The savage punishment featured in ‘Angry youth poisoned his parents’ is firmly located in African culture by the mention early in the article that the family are treated by a sangoma⁵¹. This, along with the trope of the vigilante crowd, establishes the article as entering the realm of ‘black savagery’. By contrast, in ‘Suspect in toddler’s hanging has dog named Kader Asmal’ (*Sowetan*, 27 October 2000) the savage punishment that disrupts the modern is the savagery of apartheid. The story in the newspaper article ‘Suspect in toddler’s hanging has dog named Kader Asmal’ (*Sowetan*, 27 October 2000) is similar to many others in its chronicle of atrocious crimes that form part of a discourse of racism. In this story an elderly (probably white) man is suspected of having hanged a black toddler⁵². Ferreira’s racism, and so his guilt of murder, is established with some

⁵¹ A sangoma is a traditional African healer.

⁵² In the narrative the suspicion of his being a murderer is attached to the suspicion that he is a racist. The possibility that he murdered the toddler is pursued through the vehicle of the possibility of his racism.

ease. Our suspicions are confirmed when we are told that he does not know Sibonelo's name, and that he calls black tenants 'kaffirs'. However, of all the evidence of his racism what is valued most highly in the text by its inclusion in the headline, is the fact that he named his dog Kader Asmal. The dog represents a confluence of many racist themes. On a previous occasion, Ferreira's dog bit Sibonelo – an event redolent with racist

Suspect in toddler's hanging has dog named Kader Asmal

By Themba Molofé

HE is 81-years-old, his dog is named Kader Asmal and his alleged racist remarks make him the number one suspect in the hanging death of a black toddler.

Today eastern Free State police will conduct forensic tests on the clothes of Mr Ernest Ferreira after the body of four-year-old Sibonelo Mbatla was found hanging from a rope tied to a beam at his home in Willows, a suburb of Bloemfontein, on Sunday.

Ferreira told *Sowetan* this week that he had nothing to do with the boy's death. This was despite the mother, Ms Ntombenhle Mbatla's insistence that Ferreira had threatened her family because she had laid a criminal charge against him after his dog bit Sibonelo.

Police spokesman Inspector Theo Fritz has confirmed that a murder docket has been opened.

Ferreira and the Mbatlas live in a commune in Willows. The mother and child lived in the house and the old man in an outer room, from the latter of which Sibonelo was found hanging.

Asked to comment on his relationship with Ms Mbatla, Ferreira said: "We are not good friends, but surely not enemies. I have lived with blacks on the farms since I was a boy."

He said he had nine children and 72 grandchildren but was living alone at the commune. Although he knew the names of all his grandchildren, including those of his in-laws, Ferreira said he did not know the name of the toddler who died.

About naming his large Alsatian after Asmal, he said: "He's got a mind just like him. I think I like him because he's firm with children."

Ferreira then said: "This dog is good, like Mandela, I would imagine."

He said that prior to his retirement he had

worked as a policeman in former National Party-controlled South Africa and as a driver in its former public works department.

He said he had not been formally charged after his dog allegedly bit Sibonelo.

Sibonelo's mother was away in Kwa-Mashu in KwaZulu-Natal during *Sowetan's* visit, but the boy's uncle, Lungisani Msibi (18), accused Ferreira of being a racist.

"He calls black tenants kaffirs and always chased Sibonelo away from the vicinity of the outer rooms. We were okay here until he began his racist talk in January. Only he knows what happened to Sibonelo," said Msibi.

A white girl aged seven, who lived in a house next door, said she had always played with Sibonelo, but her grandmother interrupted before she could say whether she was present when Sibonelo died.

She said: "I was robbed of R500, you know," and took the girl into the house.

Figure 14. 'Suspect in toddler's hanging has dog named Kader Asmal' (*Sowetan*, 27 October 2000)

connotations not only in media representations, but also in popular narratives. The dog is not only compared to Kader Asmal – "he's got a mind just like him" – but to Mandela.

About naming his large Alsatian after Asmal, [Ferreira] said: "He's got a mind just like him. I think I like him because he is firm with children."

[He] then said: "This dog is good, like Mandela, I would imagine." (paras 8-9)

The insult of comparing his dog to prominent government figures further confirms Ferreira as a racist. It also links modern discipline with savage punishment.

In '..Dog named Kader Asmal' the savagery of the old man's alleged punishment of the toddler, and through the figure of the old man, the savagery of apartheid is linked to the regularised discipline of the modern. In the old man's dog – who is 'firm' with children – the strictness of the modern is conflated with the savagery of the past that is signified in

Although the journalist makes reference to the paraphernalia of a murder investigation – the forensic tests, the murder docket – the text itself details an investigation into the possibility of his *racism*, rather than his being a murderer. It is implicit that if Ferreira is guilty of racism, then he is guilty of murder.

the racist old man himself. The old man reveals the paradox of apartheid – that modern discipline is savage punishment. The importance of the dog is the possibility of savage punishment in the modern, the possibility that Asmal’s regularised strictness is also savage. To some extent this is simply a reiteration of a problematic I have already commented on: that the anxiety regarding modernity and its discipline is sometimes an anxiety about ‘African order’ which is associated with savagery. However, what is unusual in this article is the conflation of anxiety regarding the modern with anxiety regarding savagery. What is revealed in the absence of an idea of the past as savage and an idea of the future as modern, in this unusual conflation of the modern and the past in one sign, is an anxiety regarding the present. The anxiety in this text is an anxiety of making meaning, of overdetermined signs. This is especially apparent in the last part of the article where the story ends with an elderly white woman interrupting the journalist’s investigation. She says, “I was robbed of R500, you know”. It is a non sequitur. Is it her reason for not allowing her grandchild, Sibonelo’s playmate who might be a witness to Sibonelo’s murder, to speak to the journalist? Is she suggesting that the murder is part of a local crime wave? Or is she presenting an alternative story for the journalist to pursue? In the narrative in which the journalist is the investigator, and in which the little white girl is a witness to the murder of her playmate, the elderly woman relating her crime story shuts the door on the investigation. The woman’s story silences Sibonelo’s story. The journalist makes a powerful point here about a racist understanding of what constitutes crime. The elderly white woman tells a story of crime against property that silences the story of crime against a person. Her story of crime against property not only silences another story of crime, but also prevents the investigation of that crime. The sign of Sibonelo’s murder becomes a signifier not of Sibonelo’s demise but of the old woman’s lost money, of ‘crime’. The anxiety of the present, which is concealed in the strict separation of the past from the future, is, in this text, an anxiety about what story is told, about what meaning is signified.

I would argue that this is the case in a great number of the articles dealing with school discipline and delinquency. The anxiety regarding the past – that is signified in revisiting savagery – and the anxiety regarding the future – that is signified in the strict discipline of

the modern – conceals an anxiety about the present. Perhaps the rupture in South African discourse between the past and the future is an unavoidable consequence of the dramatic and rapid change in political regime. Such a split is encouraged in apartheid and colonial discursive practices – which premise the construction of race on exactly the division between the modern and the savage. Mudimbe (1988) suggests that the anxiety of underdevelopment – the difference between an idea of the past’s traditions and an idea of the future’s modernity – is also an anxiety about being African. The insistence on strict discipline is an insistence on this split between past and future. However, the strict discipline of keeping the modern and the savage separate was, under apartheid rule, the strict discipline of keeping to racial definitions. The conflation of the modern and the savage is also the abandonment of racial boundaries.

A discussion of how modernity, tradition and savagery feature in media discourse is important for understanding how change is being framed in contemporary South Africa, and because this discourse is an important part of the context of influential policy like the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*. However, perhaps its greatest importance lies in establishing that the explanations of student delinquency are inadequate. The reductive narrative of students and teachers caught in a behavioural time warp, of students and teachers exposed in their savage nature is inadequate not only to the local histories but also to the grand narrative articulating apartheid and post-apartheid schools – after all the same physical spaces.

5. TRANSGRESSING THE FRONTIER: STUDENTS' PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATIONS OF EVERYDAY SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Despite Harbour Crest¹'s proud tradition of valuing human rights, the 'laws of classroom discipline' at this public secondary Cape Town school provide a cogent example of the need for the kinds of codes of conduct envisioned in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*. The fact that the disciplinary rules are integrated into a school ethos that values human rights and tolerance suggests that a human rights ethos espoused in a code of conduct might continue to be haunted by a modern desire for strict discipline and, so, for savagery. In *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* it is suggested that 'discipline' will prevent the continued practice of the savagery of apartheid. Similarly, in the news accounts analysed in chapter four it is suggested that strict discipline will prevent the re-articulation of savagery. Certainly at Harbour Crest, a school in an area that suffered extensive forced removals, apartheid received no support. On the contrary, teachers and students pride themselves on the school's history of resistance to apartheid – the school's continued existence is testament to the strength of that resistance. Nevertheless, both the tone and the content of the rules reproduced below countermand the discourse of learner-centredness, of facilitation and negotiation suggested in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*. Instead the rules emphasise a bureaucratic, authoritarian control that is centred on surveillance as a means of controlling the school space.

THE LAWS OF CLASS DISCIPLINE

1. Every pupil must **LINE UP** in the Class Lines after the morning, and 'End of Interval' bells have been sounded.
2. Classes are only allowed to **MOVE** to their Classrooms **WHEN** a Teacher or School Prefect has **TOLD** them to do so.
3. **MOVE** to your Classrooms **QUICKLY** and **QUIETLY**.
4. **SETTLE DOWN** immediately and prepare yourself for the Lesson.
5. It is the duty of the **MONITORS** to ensure that the Class is Open that the Boards are Cleaned, and that there is an Adequate Supply of Chalk to last the day.
6. Class monitors should take an **ATTENDANCE CHECK** at the start of each lesson and inform the Teachers of any absentees.
7. You must **GREET** anyone who enters the Classroom.
8. **STAND** when you **GREET**.
9. **RAISE YOUR HAND** to indicate that you would like to speak.

10. Only SPEAK WHEN ASKED to.
11. DO NOT DISRUPT ANY CLASS during or between periods!
12. NOISE or disruptions will not be tolerated. .
13. PUPILS are NOT allowed to leave the Classroom without the Permission of the TEACHER in the CLASS.
14. Pupils are only allowed out of class with a VALID PERMISSION CARD.
15. Pupils are NOT ALLOWED to go to the TOILET; PUBLIC TELEPHONES; TUCKSHOP or VENDING MACHINES during Periods.
16. NO-ONE is allowed out of CLASS during FREE PERIODS and pupils are to remain in their CLASSROOMS.
17. NO EATING or DRINKING is allowed DURING LESSONS.
18. KEEP YOUR CLASSROOMS CLEAN, NEAT and TIDY.
19. CLASSES MUST BE CLEANED at the end of the school day.
20. DO NOT DISRUPT ANY CLASS during or between periods!
21. NO BALL GAMES are allowed at the front of the school.
22. Line up Quietly and Orderly when going to the TUCK-SHOP.
23. If you are NOT IN THE LINE then MOVE AWAY from the Area.
24. The STAIRWAY at the Tuck-shop is out of bounds and may NOT be used during INTERVALS!
25. Pupils are NOT allowed to SMOKE anywhere on the SCHOOL PREMISES, and while they are in School UNIFORM.

The classroom rules above are concerned mostly with movement. Students must line up before entering their classes. They are supposed to be in possession of a 'permission card' if they are out of the classroom during class. They are supposed to stand when they greet adults who enter the class, and so on. Not only the content, but also the style of the classroom rules enacts a prohibitive rather than participatory mode of school control. The use of capital letters, the word 'pupil' and the imperative tone combine to reprimand the reader. Students are interpellated as already delinquent. The rules are part of a discourse of development, where the civilised order of modern discipline is sought after. This order is signified in a regimental control over the use of school spaces and also in the emphasis on cleanliness that recalls the colonial equation of dirt and black delinquency. In their restriction of independent movement and in the way students are interpellated the rules reflect an understanding of school discipline as prohibitive rather than, as Asmal phrases it in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, 'corrective and educational'. There is also no sense in the rules of what educational theorist Maxine Greene describes as 'emergence' into an 'awareness of their perceptual landscapes'. Nor is there an indication of what she

¹ This is a pseudonym.

terms ‘moral choosing’, of helping students “to attain some kind of clarity about how to choose, how to decide what to do” (1978, p.48).

However, these rules do not entirely represent how discipline is performed at Harbour Crest. Looking at the photographs and my fieldnotes, the rules do not seem to preclude students moving about the school during class periods, or classrooms that are messy and disorderly. Nor, again according to my observation, do these rules mean that some classrooms are not places of active inquiry, critical debate and independent thinking, nor that there are not easy and trusting relationships between teachers and students. The rules may not be universally applied in the same way. The real school order emerges in the interstices between the policy and its use.

The concern for everyday practice in schools exhibited in the policy document and in the news reports is readily read in terms of the binary opposition of modernity and savagery. Schools are, however, complex spaces in which binary meta-narratives must fail, given the multiplicity of everyday practices, and given the diversity in how such practices signify locally. In part the discrepancy between the classroom rules and the practice of discipline at Harbour Crest can be explained by noting that the generation of any policy is a process that is fraught with compromises and mis-expressions (Ball, 1990) that affect how it is implemented. In general, educational theorists describe the relationship between national or district policies and local implementation as complex (e.g. Schlechty, 1990). Cuban (1998) comments on how policy tends to be translated in local practice. Deal (1990) argues that school reform is located in the generation of narratives of heroism and values that are specific to each school. In suggesting that collegial relationships are important to school reform Warren Little (1990) suggests that specific local histories affect how reform is implemented. Chisholm’s (1999) discussion of teachers and democratic practice in schools suggests that it cannot simply be assumed that no transformation is taking place, nor that it will always take the same form. Further, Furlong (1985) describes student delinquency as a mode of signification that is more complex than behavioral or institutional deficiency, more complex than the expression of class, gender or racial resistance to hegemony. He suggests that student delinquency is a system of signification that has individual and local significance as well as broader significance (I return to this point later in this chapter). The above discussion means both that the

potential for local transformation is staggering, and that it is unlikely that local transformation will make sense in terms of a meta-narrative. The likelihood of dramatic before-and-after scenarios is small because, firstly, it cannot be assumed that no transformation has already taken place. Secondly, it cannot be assumed that changes are implemented in the same way by all teachers or in all classrooms – nor that all students will respond in same way.

The idea of the school as a frontier space is appealing partly because that is how it has functioned historically (see chapter two). However, this way of understanding the South African school obscures the extent to which the school is an institution where practice is defined in the interstices between local and national systems of signification – or even between student and teacher systems of signification, and so on. In contemporary South African discursive practice the importance of local systems of signification is virtually ignored in favour of much broader temporal and geographical ways of making sense. This is perhaps both necessary and understandable given the immensity of the discursive change that has taken place, and also given the way in which apartheid policy framed its conformist, authoritarian regime of oppression exactly in terms of local difference. The local has been, in some senses, problematic as the location of colonial and apartheid reinventions of ‘tradition’. The invention of ‘local tradition’ was essential to justifying the policy of forcibly removing black South Africans to rural ‘homelands’. It was also crucial to the reinvention of tribalism that justified not only the attempt to situate black South Africans in a separate geographical space but also the attempt to situate them in a separate temporal space (as discussed in chapter two). However, this ‘retribalisation’ also means that the local was really simply homogenised enactments of colonial and apartheid fantasies.

To some extent the problem of transformation is not a uniform one of transforming local ‘punishment’ into national ‘discipline’, but rather enabling a non-conformist way of understanding local discipline and delinquency in relation to a nationally determined framework. In other words, transformation lies in the representation of local practice not as the failure or success of modernity or savagery on a national scale, but as the articulation of a local present.

In this chapter I discuss how students have represented their school space. The school buildings are associated both with positive and negative abstract principles: while the school space as a whole is referred to as a disciplinary space it also features delinquent locations. These principles are related to the discourse of development, and so refer to modernity and savagery. However students evade the binary discourse of underdevelopment and modernity not only in specific pictures, but also in how they use the school spaces to articulate private meaning. First, I discuss my methodology.

Methodology

For the purposes of my study I asked students to make creative (rather than documentary) photographic portrayals of discipline and delinquency in their school. My decision to use a visual methodology where students generated their own texts has its roots in my encounters with the work of Sacks (2001) and Ewald (2000). Sacks produced an exhibition that featured interviews with West Indian banana farmers. On entering the exhibition space, which was mostly taken up with a series of screen made of dried banana skins, the overwhelming impression was of homogeneity. However, listening to the tapes concealed behind the screens opened up a world of difference between each similar-seeming screen. I was struck by how the exhibition was a space not only for the artist to pursue social commentary on the problems with globalisation, but also for the farmers to speak for themselves of what about business conditions made it difficult to make a profit. The direct nature of the texts, listening to farmers' actual voices, and the incidental sounds of insects or of other people speaking in the background made this different world very real, even in the sterile, quiet gallery space. Sacks' work inspired me to try and find a research methodology that would afford students a space to articulate their experiences in as direct a way as possible to readers other than myself. I felt challenged to find a methodology that would allow students at least the possibility to make complex and nuanced texts about what is unremarkable in their part of the school's disciplinary processes. However, I was concerned with how to make students' texts accessible to readers. In solving this problem I was challenged by Ewald's (2000) work, where she provides children with a space to articulate their experiences in her collaborative photographic projects. Usually working with students as a photography teacher, she encourages school children to express their dreams and nightmares, as well as their everyday experiences in photographs and short written pieces. Although clearly personal and sometimes

idiosyncratic, these photographs were nevertheless evocative and sometimes articulate texts. This work inspired me to find ways of making this kind of creative expression possible for my respondents. In the following section I will describe the respondents, the process of data-generation, and discuss in more detail the application of a visual methodology.

Respondents

As indicated earlier in the chapter, Harbour Crest is a public secondary school in Cape Town. During apartheid it was reserved for students classified as ‘coloured’, and this continues to be the dominant racial identity of the school. As mentioned earlier, it is situated in a community that was devastated by extensive forced removal.

Consequently, students travel long distances from a wide range of locations in and outside of Cape Town. It is a prestigious school, and students go on waiting lists to be admitted. Although the school is well-resourced compared to most South African schools in the numbers of teachers, the school buildings, the equipment available and the quality of teaching, it nevertheless significantly less well-resourced than a school previously reserved for white students.

After a preliminary visit to the school and after receiving permission from the school principal, 40 Grade 11² students were selected to take part in the project. The selection was to some extent random, since two classes were chosen who had completed their syllabus. Grade 11 was selected as it could be assumed that most students were well-versed in their school’s discursive practice. There were equal numbers of young men and women in the classes. Although students were from a range of cultural backgrounds, the great majority would have been classified as coloured under apartheid regulations. I will not refer to the students’ race or gender in my analysis of the photographs. I am more interested here in how the tropes of savagery that I have already identified in the analysis of the policy document and the news articles are reiterated or disrupted in the photographs than I am in deciphering every meaning in an image. Part of the strength of the photographs as medium of expression is that they signify on a number of levels. In this analysis one level of

² Grade 11 is the second last year of schooling. Students would commonly be between the ages of 16 and 18.

meaning is examined: the representation of discipline and delinquency, especially as expressed in the representation of space.

Data-generation

I met four times with each group of about 20 students before they took any photographs. During these 30-minute sessions students made collaged masks to wear in the photographs. The masks provided the possibility of anonymity. However, in addition, during a session in which we discussed the ways in which photographs could do more than document reality, I asked students to include them in photographs to remind them that their task was not to document 'facts' but to represent their understanding of the workshopped topics. During these sessions I also explained to students that their photographs were for use in my dissertation, and that my dissertation was on the topic of school discipline and delinquency. I also informed students that they masks would allow them to remain anonymous, and assured them that teachers would not know who took what photographs. In some instances students have chosen not to wear masks. In some photographs teachers are not masked. It should be noted that not all teachers feature in the photographs, and that those that do are all pictured in a number of different roles (e.g. in both positive and negative ways). The first list of workshopped topics was generated in collaboration with students: drugs, smoking, sexual harassment, racism, discipline, order, friendship, soft approach, hard approach. The second list was used on the second occasion that they took photographs, and was provided by myself: school heart, school spirit, school brains, school eyes, and school mouth. I was interested in provoking students to make associative leaps, and to make connotative representations. Students used these lists as starting points and frequently took photographs that made no reference to these topics. Students were assured that staff members would not be informed of who took what picture. This would, in any event, be difficult to determine in some cases. While some students worked individually, most worked in small groups. They took photographs during two extended sessions totaling over four hours. They had the opportunity to look at the developed photographs from the first session before starting the second session. On the completion of the project students could choose five photographs each to retain personal copies of³.

³ A small exhibition was staged during school hours of photographs selected by the students. The exhibition was mostly attended by students. The focus of the exhibition was less on displaying photos

Visual methodology

A number of theorists have commented recently on the importance of the visual in how contemporary culture is expressed and in how it is understood (e.g. Hall, 1997; Emmison & Smith, 2000; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; Lister & Wells, 2001). The use of a visual methodology in my study addressed both conceptual and practical concerns. Since I was interested in determining how students represented school discipline, it was of primary importance that the format of the texts they produced did not dictate its contents. I was also concerned both that students would enjoy the process of generating my data, and that their teachers would perceive pedagogic value in their students taking part in my project. I will deal with this last, simpler point first. As a change from their usual routine, it was appealing and enjoyable for students to take photographs. Students' access to cameras and film, as well as the creative preparatory sessions, made taking part in the study attractive to both students and to their teachers. The data-generation process and the exhibition that followed functioned as extra-curricular enrichment classes. It has also meant circumventing problems regarding respondents' mother tongue, and so circumvents either the disadvantaging of students whose mother tongue is not English or the use of translators. Similarly, using photography avoids students' possible resistance to writing⁴.

This brings me back to my conceptual motivations for selecting a visual methodology. Since I was investigating discipline, and hoping to elicit responses that were in opposition to the dominant school discourse, it was extremely important to choose a mode of representation that was not already overtly associated with school disciplinary technologies (Foucault, 1977). Writing, for instance, would for some students not only be associated with inadequacy but with the dividing practices of class work, and with the record-keeping of the office. Interviews were considered as a possibility, but would also have showcased my own authority in a way that would

of delinquency than on displaying portraits of school mates, and that appeared to be what was most interesting to the students attending it.

⁴ This possibility was proved to be real when students were asked to write a brief explanation for the pictures they used in their masks, and only one student completed the exercise. Although students were given sheets on which to indicate the captions of photographs, they tended not to use the sheets. Captions were in most cases added to photographs during a special session devoted to this purpose. Nevertheless a significant proportion of the photos are not captioned.

unduly influence the data. In addition, this format is very time-consuming and would not have allowed as many students to take part in the project. Cameras allow for making a great many representations in a short period of time, and with a great deal of spontaneity. While oral accounts of school order would have been very rich sources of data, acquiring these and transcribing them would have exceeded the time available for fieldwork. In addition, I felt that the necessity for an interview schedule would leave less leeway for students to introduce their own terms of reference than what was possible if they were engaged in generating the topics for the photographs, and were not required to stick to those topics. This proved to be the case in practice since students not only generated their own topics but also felt free to abandon those topics. The results are therefore more indicative of their own discursive framework than of mine.

Although South African schools do not regularly use photographs as a means of controlling students, the school is an institution that regularly relies on surveillance as a mode of control, and so draws on Bentham's idea of the panopticon. The association between the visual and techniques of discipline has made the use of photographs especially pertinent in a study on discipline (Emmison & Smith, 2000). Students were able to avoid their own school's discipline by remaining anonymous in the photographs, and by the photographs not being made available to teachers. However, at the same time they were able to exploit the power of seeing in recording their disciplinary discourse.

Photographs are most commonly associated with records of reality (Emmison & Smith, 2000). Their early use was in anthropological studies where photographs were considered unproblematic ways of recording reality (Ball & Smith, 1992). Barthes (2000) problematises this idea that reality is directly reflected in noting that meaning in photographs continues to be polysemous. Hall (1997) notes that photographs, like other signs, have denotative and connotative meanings, and produce meaning in comparative, intertextual ways. In the photographs in this study the masks serve as a reminder both to the student photographers and to viewers of the photographs that these texts are not simple records of reality, but, rather, records of ways of seeing. Although not all the photographs are staged, they are all instances in the production of discourse.

For Emmison and Smith (2000) the equation of photography with visual methodology is both problematic and misleading. They argue strongly that photography should not be the only form of visual data considered since visual data includes three-dimensional forms of discursive practice such as objects, the uses of space, movement and the body, as well as two-dimensional forms such as maps, images and road signs. They also include among visual data headlines. Photography is sometimes a way of storing visual information that is actually spatial – and so is not always the most appropriate way of storing it (for instance, blueprints would also be a good way of accessing spatial information – although these would be examples of the architect’s rather than students’ discursive practice). In my study the photographs do not so much record the uses of space, but record some of the ways in which the school space is conceived of. I am investigating how students *represent* rather than how they actually use the school space.

Emmison & Smith describe spatial considerations as central to the analysis of visual data. In my analysis of the news articles metaphysical concerns regarding modernity and savagery are frequently expressed in terms of the features of schools’ physical spaces. This concern is also apparent in popular media representations like *Yizo Yizo* (Markgraaf, 2001) where the disrepair of the school buildings is directly related to the gangsters’ ascendancy. In *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* the school space is referred to in the model Code of Conduct in that learners have the right to a ‘safe’ school environment. The suggested schemata of misconduct privileges vandalism and other violations of school space. This concern is echoed in another influential policy document, *Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (DOE, 2001), where a section is devoted to the issue of keeping school grounds safe from vandalism and crime, and where this is associated with fostering democratic principles. Spatial concerns have emerged as primary in contemporary South African discursive practice. In addition, within the photographs themselves, spatial setting is a dominant signifying practice. The representation of space is important to my analysis of the student photographs.

The photographs express the intersection between place and space, where place indicates a location’s ‘proper’ dimensions and uses and where “space is practiced

place” (de Certeau, 1984, p.117). In the photographs discursive practices are articulated in spatial terms. So, for instance, the kinds of photographs that are set in the place of the classroom indicate not only how students conceptualise discipline and delinquency, but also how the space of the classroom is defined in terms of discipline and delinquency.

Analysis

My analysis draws on elements of grounded theory and semiotic analysis (Titscher et al, 2000). In that I have divided texts into categories and then examined the patterns, there are areas of commonality between this analysis and structural analysis.

However, unlike structural analysis I have not relied on the predetermined categories of content analysis but have drawn these categories from the data (Emmison & Smith, 2000; Alexander, 1994). My study has a large sample size, which allows for the observation of structural categories and processes. The dominant structural categories selected are the representations of students, teachers and the settings of the photographs. Although initially I had planned to use the categories generated in collaboration with the students, students themselves tended not to stick to these categories. I did not want to exclude ‘off-the-topic’ pictures from the study since they were frequently extremely interesting, and also since they were by definition even more revealing of students’ discursive framework than those that referred to the initial topics. I relied to some extent on the captions to indicate a preferred reading.

Although Barthes (1993) can be understood as describing images as ‘uncoded’, as Van Leeuwen and Kress (1996) point out, captions are authoritative in fixing meaning for images. However, in my limited reliance on captions I drew on Pink’s (2000) understanding that the meanings respondents make of images should be taken into account in their analysis. For this reason, photographs without captions were excluded from the study. However, the captions are in most cases quite sparse, so although they do provide some points of reference I have also had to rely on other points of reference (such as e.g. facial expressions) in order to establish whether the preferred reading is, e.g. positive or negative. I am also interested in the ways in which the photographs together form a discursive framework, and so have looked for common themes besides those indicated in the captions (such as e.g. lining up). A significant proportion of the photographs is not captioned: of the total number of photographs (600), I have analysed only the 253 that are captioned. Of these I have included 18 in

the body of this text. I have also created hyperlinks to additional photographs that I cite as further examples to the photographs analysed in more detail in the text. The photographs included in the text are in some cases representative of a genre and in some cases particularly expressive or expressive of a particularly nuanced and interesting meaning.

As with the news reports I began by sorting photographs into categories. These were determined according to where the photographs were set: classrooms, corridors, administrative and teacher spaces, and the playground. Within these broad categories I also isolated specific places if they featured in a number of pictures (e.g. the area behind a disused classroom that technically falls under the 'playground' category). Where such 'subset' spaces are especially different in character to the larger set I have indicated this, although this is rarely the case. I will discuss my decision to use spatial categories shortly. Within these categories I have maintained an awareness of how students and teachers, and 'good' and 'bad' behaviour are characterised. As with the news articles, I analyse selected photographs that are either exemplary, or that do not fit in with the dominant discursive patterns either by being in opposition to them or by presenting a very complex narrative (Rose, 2001; Hall 1997).

My main avenue of inquiry, however, was what was presented as normative in the photographs. In this my analysis assumes a normative discursive practice, and I rely, as with the news articles, on intertextual comparison (see also Hall, 1991). However, in addition to this structural analysis (Alexander, 1994), I refer to the formal elements in the pictures. These include the content of the picture, as well as the framing of the subject (Barrett, 2000; Rose, 2001). It should be noted that the photographs would bear a number of different analytical approaches, and a number of different focuses within those analyses. For instance, it would also have been fruitful to divide them according to the workshop topic they were a response to. Although this would have meant the exclusion of photographs that were not on the workshop topics, the main reason I excluded this line of inquiry was that I wanted to sketch the framework of the discursive practices suggested in the photographs themselves. While requiring the captions in order to anchor the students' representations, I was particularly interested in pictures that exceeded the topics suggested and that exceeded what emerged as

standard ways of perceiving order and disorder. The photographs display a great reliance on binary oppositions (Hall, 1997) which Emmison and Smith describe as concepts or signifiers which are arranged in pairs but opposite to each other... In the picture of a policeman being kicked, the binary oppositions are between the policeman: protester, victim: aggressor, and law-and-order: mob. (67)

A considerable number of the photographs present a value-laden narrative, where the viewer is 'encouraged to imagine what has happened in the past and, perhaps, what is going to happen next' (Emmison & Smith, 2000, 67). Somewhat similarly, some of the pictures present subject positions (Emmison & Smith, 2000) for students and teachers that are imbued with value by the narrative illustrated or by the caption. The photographs create a coherent system of signs that signify not only discrete wrongdoings (like sexual harassment) but also 'good student', 'bad student', 'good teacher', 'bad teacher'.

I refer to the photographs as instances of disciplinary discourse, as semiotic elements of social practice. It should be noted that in this approach is implied that the photographs are polysemous and that their meaning is not fixed. Their meaning shifts according to how they "interact with, cross-reference and produce meaning in relation to other elements in the text, and how these connections are given meaning by discourses and gazes that exist outside the text" (Pink, 2000, 137; see also Rose, 2001). The fact that the photographs are not necessarily meaningful in my study in the same way as their meaningful to the student photographers or to other members of the school community is at the heart of my analysis. Although meaningful in regard to each other and in regard to the discursive framework evidenced in the news articles and the policy document, the photographs also have significant private meanings that are difficult for me to access.

In the photographs students produce the social practice of discipline. Their representations of discipline must be understood in the context of the macro-level disciplinary discourse of state education policy and print news media reports on schools. The photographic analysis refers to the analyses of policy and media discourse, especially in how a dichotomy of savagery and civilisation is invoked, and in how teachers are represented. Therefore, while examining the photographs for the outlines of a normative discursive framework that operates in the photographs, I

related their normative discursive framework with that suggested in my analyses of the policy document and news articles.

However, I am less interested in the representivity of the photographs than their specific articulations of discursive practice. I return to the issue of representivity in the next section.

Visual representations of privileged knowledge have been used in studies of children's responses to testing (Wheelock et al, 2000), understanding young children's use of their school playground (Humphries & Rowe, 1994) and their neighbourhood space (Leavitt et al, 1998). This way of seeing the photographs draws on the idea of accessing students' points of view through visual representation, one of the aims of this study. However, there is a danger in this approach of regarding the photographs as the productions of naïve respondents. This implies setting students' discursive practice apart from that of adults, and interpellating them as innocent of technology and their point of view as mysterious: 'othering' them. Historically, photographic and filmed anthropological studies have been important in producing 'otherness' (Maxwell, 1999; Hartmann et al, 1998; Hall, 1997). In a project in which some Navajo people were taught to make short films, Adair and Worth (1972) attempt to shift the balance of power.

Increasingly as technologies of filming and television develop, the record of [vanishing cultures] is being made on film. But who makes these films? "We" do... We do because that is the way to be objective, scientific and accurate... We do because it never occurred to us that "they" ought to be doing it, that "they" can do it, and most importantly that when "we" do it we are showing a picture of our world and salvaging a culture not of others but of ourselves. Our record of them might very well be a record of us. (Adair & Worth, 1972, 254)

This idea is predicated on the naïve filmmakers, the Navajo, being nothing but mirrors on their social order. It is implied that the Navajo filmmakers can capture an accurate record of their social order because they are considered to be culturally pure. The practical shortcomings of Adair and Worth's conceptual approach is evident in their analysis sometimes degenerating into a comparison between the kinds of filming techniques and narrative themes explored by white, Native American and African American naïve filmmakers.

The students in my study should not be regarded as ‘naïve’ photographers. Although some of them may not have used a camera before, they have a great degree of access to visual culture in the form of television, advertising, film and printed material (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996). Their photographs cannot be considered as naïve documentation, but should rather be understood as active engagements in a semiotic process (see e.g. Leavitt et al, 1998; Wheelock et al, 2000). In Ewald’s (2000) collaborative work with young children and teenagers, the photographic medium is used to produce eloquent representations of young people’s dreams, fantasies and social issues. Pink (2000) sees visual methods as offering ‘ambiguity and expressivity’. The unique nature of each photograph, and the possibilities for nuanced expression does not preclude patterns emerging within the sample. It does mean that students have, as it were, a large palette as regards the expression and production of their discursive practices.

Representativeness

Although the student photographs represent a distinct point of view on school social order, they cannot be considered representative of a student point of view. As Bhabha (1994) points out, a privileged position within a community, like within a nation or a culture, is constituted in a movement between belonging and not belonging, between being the ‘many as one’ and ‘out of many one’. In producing a photographic representation of school social order, the photographer/s stand inside and outside of their community. The photographs are therefore not necessarily directly representative of the discursive practices of Harbour Crest’s student body – any more than the news articles in chapter four can be considered as exactly representative of the South African public’s views on school discipline. Although *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* is, unlike the photographs or the news articles, a considered statement of policy by the DOE, it can, like the photographs and the news articles, also not be considered an exact and immutable representation of every member of the DOE’s point of view. However, all these representations are significant (either in import or in sample size) instances of discursive practice that may be considered as indicative of the framework of what is discursively possible. In this I draw on a ‘cultural studies approach’ (Lister & Wells, 2001; Emmison & Smith, 2000; Hall, 1997; Mirzoeff, 1999) where texts are approached as part of a ‘circuit of culture’ (du Gay, 1997). In

the 'circuit of culture' selected texts are examples of broader processes of constructing an ideological point of view.

Similarly, as indicated earlier in this chapter, Harbour Crest cannot be considered typical. It is in some ways a privileged school in its proud history of resistance against apartheid. Materially, the school is comparatively well-resourced, although not as well-resourced as many schools that were previously reserved for white children. However, I argue that the way in which order is conceived in the school reproduces as well as resists the macro-level education policy and print news discursive practice. Somewhat similarly, the photographs can only be considered fragmentary representations of a whole. They were generated under very particular circumstances by a relatively small group of students. They cannot be considered as systematic or consistently motivated. Nevertheless, they do constitute a fairly consistent and specific representation of order in the school in question. The student point of view that they offer is unusual in research on school discipline (Furlong, 1985), and highly evocative.

Representations of the school space

The focus in the 'classroom laws' on the appropriate use of various kinds of places in the school suggests that place and space are important at Harbour Crest. The buildings are also historically significant. Harbour Crest is a school that prides itself on its role in the South African struggle and on its alumni in parliament. The school buildings themselves are signs of triumph over the apartheid state, as they were to be knocked down as part of a forced removal of a Cape Town community. Though the buildings in some of the photographs may now appear somewhat dilapidated it is important to remember that they physically disrupted the apartheid landscape, and that they continue to be a source of pride. The buildings already represent a triumph over apartheid.

They also feature in enacting a discipline of spatial constraint on students' narratives: the different narratives presented in the photographs – of misbehaviour, learning and identity – correspond with different areas of the school. The disrepair evidenced in some of the photographs the school buildings come to stand for the possibility of the failure of the modern. The way in which the buildings signify in the student

photographs resonates more generally with the uneasy position discipline occupies in post-apartheid discourse. Discipline stands for the hope of post-apartheid enlightenment, but also for the security of tradition. In both of these discursive guises, discipline is an important occasion for the reiteration of various tropes of savagery. This is again the case in the disciplinary discursive practice at Harbour Crest. The representations of student misconduct are haunted by the possibility of the mob, and the representations of teacher authority are haunted by the possibility of shameful punishing.

The photographs represent the physical space of the school, but they also represent the students' discursive space. They indicate how the physical space of the school features in discursive practice. A number of photographs have as their subject the walls, the windows or the school façade. The way in which meaning is made in a great deal of the photographs relies on how space is used by the people portrayed. All the photographs have the school space – the classrooms, hallways, reception areas, perimeter and playground – as their setting. All three these types of engagement with the physical school space are pertinent to my discussion of the school's discursive space.

Where the physical school space is explicitly the subject of the photographs, students associate the buildings with abstract concepts. For instance, in 'Education' the school buildings do not stand for the school itself, but for its larger purpose: education. In this the school is endowed with mythic significance in the same way as I have argued discipline is in South African macro-discourse. Sometimes the school buildings are associated with positive principles such as education or school spirit, and sometimes with negative principles such as decay or corruption.

It should be noted that a lot of the photographs are infused with a sense of mischievousness – a point to which I will return to later in the chapter. However, the evidence of irony notwithstanding, there are notable patterns in how school spaces are represented. Students represent their school space in predominantly two ways. In the first, the school buildings signify in terms of abstract principles such as education or decay, i.e. in terms of the dominant discourse of modernity that is also articulated in the policy document and news articles. The school buildings feature equally

prominently in the photographs simply as backdrops for private accounts of identity, personal relationships and a history of the everyday. In this certain locations are associated with certain narratives. Classrooms are the setting for representations of good, orderly behaviour⁵, and, as a corollary, of minor disruptions such as being noisy⁶. The corridors are usually either the scene of portraits of friends⁷ or staged fights and staged acts of sexual harassment⁸. A staged picture of students stealing a can of cooldrink from a vending machine notwithstanding ('School hands', 4373), the ground floor – the assembly area and its surrounding corridors – is more often the scene of staged good behaviour. For example, in 'Discipline/ order' (4366) a row of students are bent over pieces of paper, using a ping-pong table for a desk. Students are also depicted writing in their notebooks or, as in 'School spirit' (4368), picking up litter. Although more narratives are set in the corridors than in the classrooms, they tend to be formulaic. There are very few casual snaps of everyday life here, with most photos carefully posed. However, a very wide range of narratives seems to be possible on the playground. The playground is the most multivalent space, being the scene of the disciplinary procedure of lining up⁹, staged sexual harassment and fights, portraits¹⁰, smoking¹¹, as well as more philosophical representations of love¹², wisdom¹³ education, freedom or constraint. I return to the multivalency of the playground and to the significance of way in which the school is used as a backdrop later in this chapter. The perimeter of the school is associated with delinquent acts, and with an affirmation of the school's physical boundaries. The teachers feature most

⁵ 'Dedication' (4367), 'Studying' (4367), 'School spirit: Work, work, work' (?), 'Order: working together' (4367), 'Commitment' (4371), 'Soft approach: learning experience' (4966), 'Teaching in progress' (4964), 'Groupwork' (?), 'Physics lab' (4966), 'Dedication' (4371), 'Disciplined class' (4319), 'School spirit' (4374), 'Learning hard' (4365), 'Group work' (4365), 'Enjoyment' (4370), 'Discipline' (4366), 'Focus' (4368), 'At work' (4964), 'School boy pride in dressing' (4964), 'Order' (4365), 'Order' (4365), 'Obedience' (4365), 'Working attitude' (4371).

⁶ 'Socialising' (4965), 'Misbehaviour' (4372), 'Noisy class' (4319), 'Hmmm...' (4966), 'Biting back' (4368), 'Standing on the tables' (4964), 'Out of control' (4964), 'Disobedience' (4365), 'Fun and games' (4365), 'Perversion' (4365), 'Klawerjas' (4966), 'No respect' (4964), 'Bruised' (4965).

⁷ School models 4371; Aneeqah 4371; Love 4368; Friendship Honesty 4371; Zuleiga 4371; Laila 4371; Friendship 4372, 'Brotherhood' (4368), 'Friendship' (4368), Friendship (4371), 'The boys' (4370), 'Friends' (4373), 'Cool' (4373), 'The boys' (4368), 'Cool cats' (4368), 'Untouchables' (4371), 'Casanovas' (4371), 'Matrics' (4371), and also the untitled pictures 29A 4374; 30A 4374; 28A 4374

⁸ 'Sexual assault' (4366), 'Sexual harassment' (4370), 'Sexual harassment' (4319).

⁹ 'Lining up' (4319), 'Discipline: lining up' (4319), 'Order' (4365).

¹⁰ 'Sexy' 1 (4371), 'Sexy' 2 (4371), 'Sexy' 3 (4371), 'Happy' (4371), 'Anger' (4371), 'Friendship' (4367), 'Masks' (4371), 'Friendship' (4365), 'Sexy' 4 (4371).

¹¹ 'Smoke break' 1 (4319), 'Smoke break' 2 (4319), 'Take a break' (4966). There is also one picture of drug-taking - 'Addicted' (4373).

¹² 'Love' (4318), 'Love' (4370), 'Love' (4371).

¹³ 'Intelligent/wise' (4317).

in pictures of the staff room and the reception areas. Here the narrative is either of trespass – where students trespass on teacher spaces – or of regulating technologies. Photos captioned ‘school heart’, ‘school spirit’ or ‘school brain’ are often set here – the trophy cabinet and the receptionist’s office occur most frequently. I will discuss these narratives, the spaces they are set in and the implications for the students’ discursive practice in the following three sections where I discuss the depiction of the school as a disciplinary, delinquent and transgressive space.

The disciplinary space

The school space is a disciplinary space in that it is in itself a mode of control. In that certain places are designated for certain activities, and in that there is a clear distinction between student and teacher spaces, the school space produces the surveillance and individuation of the students. In addition, the organisation of the school building functions somewhat like Bentham’s (1843) panopticon prison model, where the design of the building facilitates the surveillance of its occupants. Foucault (1977), commenting on Bentham’s ideas, notes that institutional ‘dividing’ practices, or ‘disciplinary technologies’ (such as examinations, case histories, lining up, registers, etc.) are part of controlling by making occupants individually visible. The school rules discussed earlier reflect how students are controlled through when and how they are present in certain spaces in the school. The photographs themselves reflect the distinction between different places in the school in that the settings of the pictures order the kind of pictures taken. In this disciplinary effect the buildings may be seen as part of the problematic of modernity and savagery under discussion in this dissertation.

The space of the school is evoked in the photographs as a disciplinary force. This is evident in that the students’ narratives are to some extent dictated by the designated function of the places in which they are set. It is also evident in how students present the school buildings as significant of a relationship with modernity. As in the news articles, the students see the physical state of the buildings as significant of order or disorder.

The school space is pronounced as separate and as an ordering principle. For instance, in ‘Fast’ (4373) a fire engine rushes past, seen through the fencing. In pictures like

this one the perimeter of the school is articulated as important, and the boundaries of the disciplinary school space are defined. The idea of freedom lying beyond the physical boundaries of the school is restated in a number of photographs that depict scenes outside the school boundaries. In 'Freedom' (4318) a mask, on which the slogan 'Heaven can wait' is prominent, is hung on the school's perimeter wall. The frame of the picture is almost completely taken up by the wall and its barbed wire. In 'Freedom' the constraint of the school disciplinary space is described as positive, as a condition that will lead to greater freedom. Constraint and promise are conflated. In other photographs the constraint more commonly located on the perimeter is moved to within the school, as in 'Prisoned' (4366), for example, where students stand forlornly behind a security gate. The idea that constraint is generative is suggested in depictions of 'good' behaviour where productivity is related to orderliness. Similarly 'good' behaviour is located in the classrooms, which are also the most regulated spaces in the school. This observable pattern in which specific places feature as settings for specific topics reflects the way in which the ordering of the school space orders discursive practice.

The school space is also depicted as disciplinary in that it is associated with surveillance. This is especially true of pictures captioned 'school eyes', one of the categories suggested in the preliminary workshops. A shot of the school façade, identical except for the presence of three masked students to the one entitled 'Foundation' (4372), is captioned 'Eyes of school'. In the sign of the school, the buildings, there is a conflation of authority and surveillance. This is not only apparent in the tendency to caption pictures of buildings both in terms of institutional authority and in terms of institutional surveillance. It is also apparent in that 'school eyes' is a common caption for pictures of authority figures like prefects. The conflation of the institution of the school with authority and surveillance is also evident in some of the pictures entitled 'school mouth'. Photographs on the topic 'school mouth' depict not only teachers, but also 'disciplinary technologies' like assignment questions or technological means of disciplining the space like intercoms and sirens.

The school space is regularly depicted in terms of disciplinary technologies. Foucaultian 'technologies of discipline' are regularly featured in portrayals of good behaviour, where gloomy students are pictured lining up before entering their

classrooms (e.g. 'Order', 4365), or where they are lined up in their classrooms behind desks. Positive depictions of authority figures sometimes associate them with such well-behaved, physically orderly classes. In this authority figures themselves feature as 'disciplinary technologies'. This representation of authority is sustained in how a significant proportion of positive generic portrayals of 'the teacher' show teachers controlling 'modern' equipment such as a television ('Teacher', 4374), a photostat machine ('Copy room', 4368), telephones ('Headmaster', 4368), and, as mentioned before, intercoms ('School mouth', 4368)¹⁴. To some extent the idea of the teacher is produced in this distinction between students and teachers: that teachers have access to such equipment and students do not. This is evident in the illustration below, which I have cropped so as to centre the forbidding notices that declare that 'Learners are not allowed to make any photocopies in here!!!!!!'

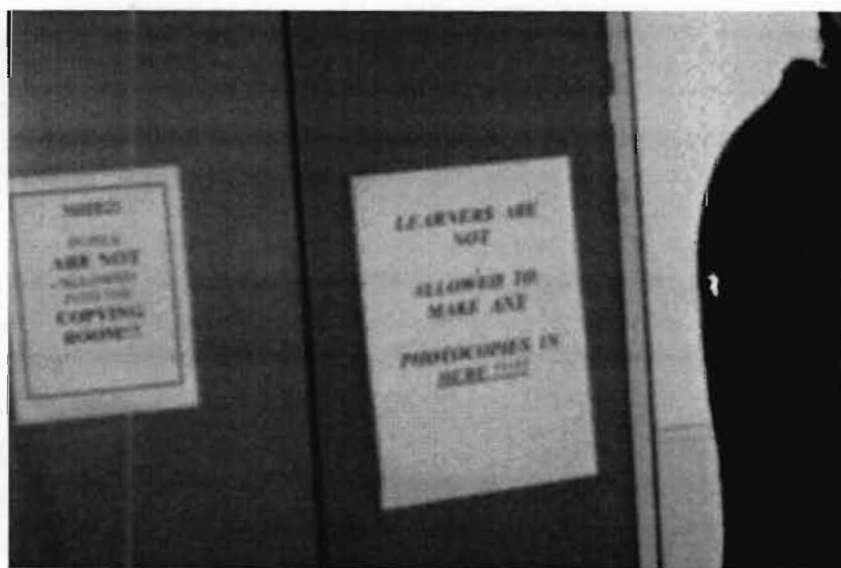


Figure 15. Detail of 'Copy room' (4368).

In 'Copy room' (4368) where a teacher is depicted making photostats the signs on the cupboard door and on the machine itself declare that learners are not allowed in this place that is reserved for teachers, using the machinery that is reserved for teachers. Here authority's privilege is declared not only in privileged space, and so associated with disciplinary technology, but is also declared in its association with technology. I discuss in the next section how the distinction between students and teachers is produced in the photographs through students trespassing on teachers' spaces.

¹⁴ See also 'School heart' (4964), 'Mouth of school' (4366).

In that the photographs set up a discursive framework in which certain places are associated with authority, with good behaviour, or simply with regulation, students associate certain physical places with the abstract concept of order. In doing so they indicate the ways in which places are lived and used, the ways in which places are spaces. Their association of order with place is not confined to depictions of narratives of good and bad behaviour, or pictures with characters in them. Students also associate the buildings themselves with abstract concepts. The buildings are signifiers for the greater discipline of the institution itself, or of the institution of education. The walls and windows are often shown as imposing, even overpowering¹⁵. In 'Education' (4370), for instance, the school buildings dominate the figures of the students, even one on top of another's shoulders.

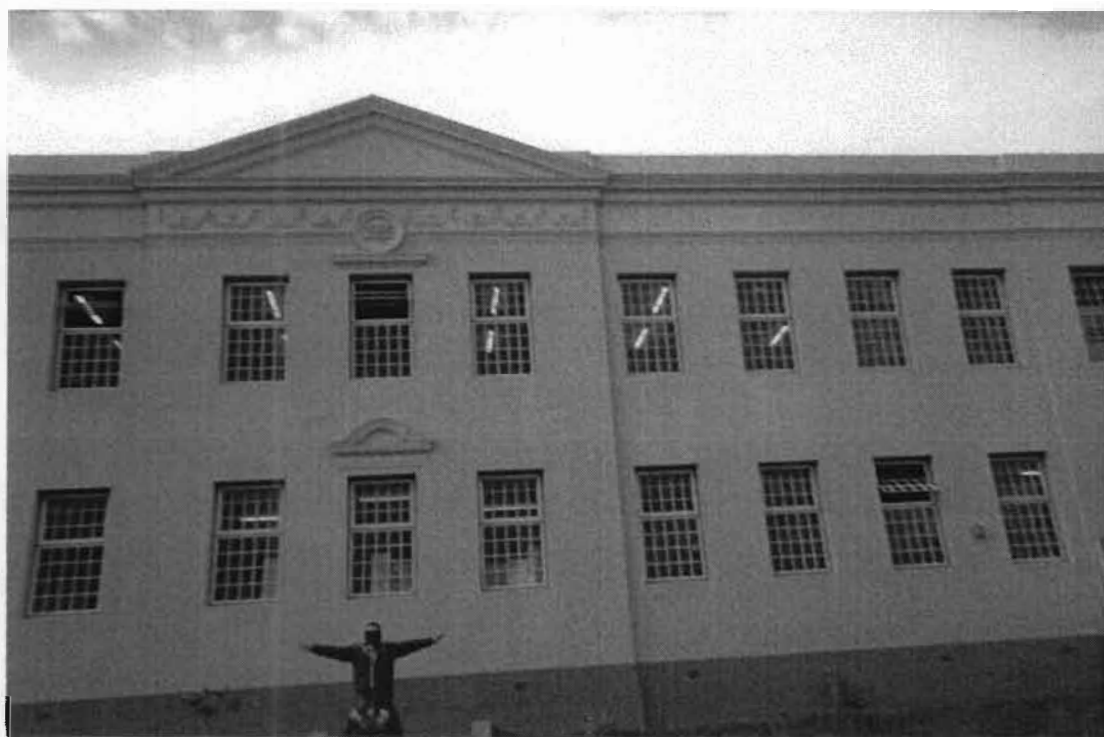


Figure 16. Education (4370).

The school buildings are sometimes a sign of education, as above, or are described as a 'foundation' (4372). In these photographs the physical school space is associated with the positive idea of students acquiring skills and knowledge. This is also implied in less positive portrayals where the school buildings are associated with disciplining oneself to the arduous task of education in order to gain rewards in the future (as in

¹⁵ 'Education' (4370), 'School heart' (4368), 'Eyes of school' (4366), 'Fears' (4373), 'Hard approach' (4365).

'Freedom' discussed above). In the notion that the buildings themselves signify the development of education, the buildings stand in some of the photographs for the possibility of the modern. In this way of seeing the disciplinary technology of the school building is associated with development. This is similar to how authority, reserved place and technology are linked in the photographs of the teachers discussed above. As in 'Copy room' (4368) the authority of education lies not only in its location in a demarcated place, inside the perimeter, but in the technology of its space: the imposing features of the school buildings.

In describing the school as a disciplinary space, the students reproduce the discourse of modernity evidenced in the policy document and news articles discussed earlier. The school is produced as a disciplinary space in its representation as a space for development.

The delinquent space

In the photographs delinquent behaviour is often framed as a spatial challenge. Students are depicted claiming the classroom by standing on the tables (e.g. 'Misbehaviour', 4370), with offensive gestures (e.g. 'Standing on the tables', 4964), graffiti ('School mouth: graffiti', 4367), and, in one notable example, students in the back of a working class are lighting up a cigarette ('School eyes: I see you', 4367). In some pictures the improper use of place is directly associated with a very stereotypical depiction of savagery: for instance in 'In the tree' (4319, below) a student is pictured in the branches of the tree wearing his mask depicting sexually intimate couples. He is staged as savage in this setting where there is no reference to the school except his uniform which only serves to highlight how out of control, how out of place, he is.

Some pictures associate delinquency even more explicitly with the improper use of place. In such pictures the idea of delinquency is represented in trespassing, as in 'Trespassing' (4365) where a female student is shown entering the male toilets, or in invasions of privacy, as in 'Got you' (4369) where students recorded a male student urinating. Similarly, students produce the distinction between teachers and students in the photographs in their trespass into teachers' spaces. I will return to this point later



Figure 17. *In the tree* (4369).

in the chapter when I discuss the relationship between discipline and delinquency. It is important to note here though that the representation of a mis-use of place relies on an implicit acknowledgement of its proper use. The location of scenes of trespass in the toilets recalls the news accounts analysed in the last chapter where the state of schools' toilets was important in determining whether the school was successfully modern. Certainly some places in Harbour Crest are more commonly the setting for scenes of delinquency than others.

Certain places in the school are strongly associated with the production of disorder. For instance, a small storage space near the perimeter wall is exclusively the site for depictions of students miming writing graffiti on the wall or miming taking drugs. Similarly, a certain location in the playground is regularly the setting for pictures of students smoking. Unlike the portrayals of 'education' and discipline discussed in the last section, where the larger spaces of the school are portrayed, the portrayals of abstract disorder are mostly set in fixed locations. These are neglected places in the school, most commonly on the perimeter. For instance, the area behind deserted classrooms, where there are a number of broken desks beneath the trees is the setting for 'Violence' (4318) and 'Corruption' (4964). 'Corruption' (see below) is a particularly evocative picture, where the disarray of broken desks recalls the potent image in *Yizo Yizo* where students burn their desks. Given the established significance

in the photographs of orderly desks and their proper use as indicative of discipline, in 'Corruption' as in *Yizo Yizo* the discarded desks may be seen to stand for a threat to the modern.



Figure 18. Corruption (4964)

'Corruption' (4964) and 'Violence' (4318) make an association between a lack of discipline and physical disrepair. This association is sustained in a great deal of the photographs of delinquency. Delinquency is not just portrayed in improper place, but also in untidyness and disrepair. Much as in the news accounts where school disruption is explained in terms of broken toilets and a lack of fences, in the photographs the problem of achieving modernity is posited to some extent as the problem of maintaining buildings. Here the anxiety of the savage in the modern is in the representation of disrepair that students describe as decay and corruption. As much as the school space is associated with the possibility of development, that is located in discipline, it is also associated in the photographs with the failure of modernity. In 'Decay 2' (4368) the peeling paint is associated with a deeper disorder than poor maintenance (see below).



Figure 19. Decay2 (4368).

In their association of physical neglect with delinquency, the student photographs propose a value system where underdevelopment is morally suspect. However, the definition of delinquency relies on the implicit acknowledgement of what proper discipline means. Similarly, the fixed location of delinquent, underdeveloped places in the school means that these coexist with the definition of the school as a disciplinary space. Fixing delinquency to certain places creates the impression that the discipline of modernity, which is associated more generally with the whole school, coexists with a constant disorder that is confined to previously determined, separate, possibly hidden, neglected places. The implication is that there is a necessary relationship between delinquency and discipline, between spaces that speak of modernity and those that speak of underdevelopment. This is similar to the relationship between modernity and lack of development. Just as colonial and apartheid discursive practice required the existence of black savagery as justification for racial supremacy (see e.g. Mudimbe, 1988), so underdevelopment is necessary in the discourse of development (Escobar, 1995). Since the school is a space for 'development', it is also a place of underdevelopment.

Discipline/delinquency

Delinquent behaviour is represented in the photographs in relation to disciplined behaviour. For instance, a disorderly classroom is what an orderly classroom is not: it features students who are not manifestly working. 'Good' behaviour is depicted in fairly stereotypical portrayals of work¹⁶. For instance, in 'Focus' (4368) and 'Learning hard' (4365), the presence of open books and lit up computer screens mark 'good' behaviour¹⁷. In keeping with the discursive framework set up in the depictions of good students, classroom disruption is located in noise and a disorderly classroom space, for example, 'Noisy class' (4319)¹⁸. In how delinquent behaviour in the classroom is represented in terms of disciplined behaviour, delinquent and disciplined behaviour are both necessary to the process of signification.

This is most evident in the depictions of teachers, where the idea of the teacher as different to students is represented in students claiming the same space as the teachers. The division between teachers and students is produced in the photographs by how students invade areas of the school reserved for teachers: the staff room and the reception area with its adjacent principal's office, administration offices and photocopy room¹⁹. All of these spaces are privileged, and students do not, as staff do, have ready access. The photographs themselves stand for breaching a separate space. The effect is heightened where students are present in the pictures, either as models or in the masks staff members wear²⁰. That the distinction between teachers and students is produced in the illicit presence of students in teachers' space is apparent in 'Mouth' (4373, below), which is set in the staff room. The masks the teachers wear stand for the students who made them. At the back of the group of teachers is a masked student, almost indistinguishable from the teachers because of his mask. The delinquency

¹⁶ Learning is not always portrayed as solitary and passive: in a number of pictures students are engaged in animated group discussions (e.g. 'Studying hard' (4367)), or in active dialogue with the teacher ('School spirit' (4374)). Occasionally good behaviour is also located in particular people where portraits are captioned 'Order' (4365), 'Obedience' (4365) and 'School boy pride in dressing' (4964).

¹⁷ See also 'Order' (4365), 'Focus' (4368), 'Dedication' (4371), 'School hands' (4374), 'Disciplined class' (4319), 'Education' (4372), 'Serious' (4372), 'School spirit' (4372).

¹⁸ See also 'Out of control' (4964), 'Socialising' (4965), 'Mmm...' (4966).

¹⁹ 'Headmaster' 4374, 'Mouth of school' 4368, 'Headmaster' 4368, 'Office' 4368, 'School heart' 4964, 'Copy room' 4368, 'Education' 4374, 'Mouth' (4372).

²⁰ 'School brains' 4966, 'Teacher in thought' 4369, 'Heart of school' 4316, 'Eyes' 4373, 'Mouth of school' 4366, 'Achievements' 4373, 'School pride' 4966, 'Mouth' 4373, 'Hands of school' 4366, 'School eyes' (4372), 'School spirit' (4372), 'School eyes' (4372), 'School spirit' (4372).

represented here is not only the invasion of the teachers' space, but also in the illicit blurring of the distinction between teachers and students.



Figure 20. Mouth (4373).

The distinction made plain in the photographs set in the teacher's spaces is also apparent in photographs set in the classroom. For example, in 'No respect' (4964) a masked student stands menacingly close to an unsuspecting seated teacher and makes aggressive gestures. Here a lack of respect is visually indicated in an invasion of the teacher's personal body space.

Performing physical closeness to the teacher in the photographs demonstrates and even maintains what is clearly an important distinction between teachers and students. Teachers' spaces are not uniformly represented in terms of invasion – although this is always implied in the students' presence there. Also, some teacher spaces are more accessible to students than others, and carry more narratives than just that of the difference between teachers and students. The reception areas, for instance, are often represented as the proper public face and the driving force of the school – the school brain, the school mouth, the school eyes, and the school spirit being depicted as located in the receptionist, the principal and the trophy display. In this teachers and teacher spaces are associated with discipline, defined as disciplinary spaces where the

proper functions of the school originate. Interestingly, however, the representation of teacher spaces in terms of delinquent acts of trespass associates them with delinquency in the same way as with the 'delinquent places' discussed in the last section. Paradoxically the discipline of proper space that the teachers stand for in the photographs is also the occasion of a delinquent appropriation of that space.

Discipline and delinquency cannot be understood as separate in the photographs. Every photograph of an act of delinquency implies the discipline it is contravening, and every portrayal of discipline implies the delinquency that could have been instead. The way in which this binary opposition is false echoes the false binary opposition of modernity and savagery, or underdevelopment. The way in which the definition of modernity relies on the possibility of savagery – or, to use Mudimbe's term, 'underdevelopment' – could be illustrated by the picture below. In the student photographs a discursive framework is set up in which the buildings, and especially the façade, signify in terms of the abstract concept of education as set against the abstract notion of disorder that recalls the binary opposition of development and underdevelopment. In this discursive framework technologies of discipline are conflated with abstract authority. In 'Fears' the frame is taken up by the school façade where an ornamental pillar and plinth echoes the long vertical crack that runs from the siren. While the siren assures the viewer of order, it is also a reminder of the need for ordering. The possibility of discipline is also the possibility of delinquency. While the monolithic façade with the ornamental pillar and plinth is reassuring of the institution of the school, of the institution of development, the long crack threatens the stability of that institution. The possibility of the modern is also the possibility of the failure of the modern. While the caption suggests private fear associated with the institution of the school, the picture signifies in terms of the established discursive framework as a reminder of the location in the disciplinary school space of necessary delinquent places. Discipline and delinquency are conflated in this picture.



Figure 21. *Fears* (4373).

Similarly, in the pictures the shame of being disciplined – of being delinquent – is conflated with disciplining so that disciplining is also presented as shameful. In the news accounts teachers are shameful in their acts of discipline as well as in their failure to discipline. Similarly the state's disciplining of teachers is also presented as a spectacle which recalls savagery even as it proves modernity. In *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* the shame of corporal punishment shifts from the act to teachers themselves, who must redeem themselves. In the photographs the act of disciplining is sometimes depicted as linked with sexual depravity (for instance, in 'Sexual assault: a spanking' (4367) and 'Sexual harassment: hanky spanky' (4966), and here discipline itself is shameful. These depictions are also parodic, and I will return later in this chapter to how students evade simplistic binaries through the sense of fun inherent to many of the pictures.

There is in these texts a conflation of authority and shame that is hard to account for, except in the necessary relationship between discipline and delinquency revealed in the photographs. That discipline and delinquency are not separate but rather dependent terms in a process of signification accounts for the shame inherent in disciplinary acts not being restricted to the one being disciplined. In the photographs

teachers' authority over students is both confirmed and shamed in students' invasion of teachers' spaces.

Despite the huge difference in school discursive practice between disciplining delinquency and being delinquent and so disciplined, the two states are necessarily located in the same act, in the same moment. This is best seen in the following two pictures representing the same event. In 'Discipline' (4368) students have represented a teacher disciplining his students.

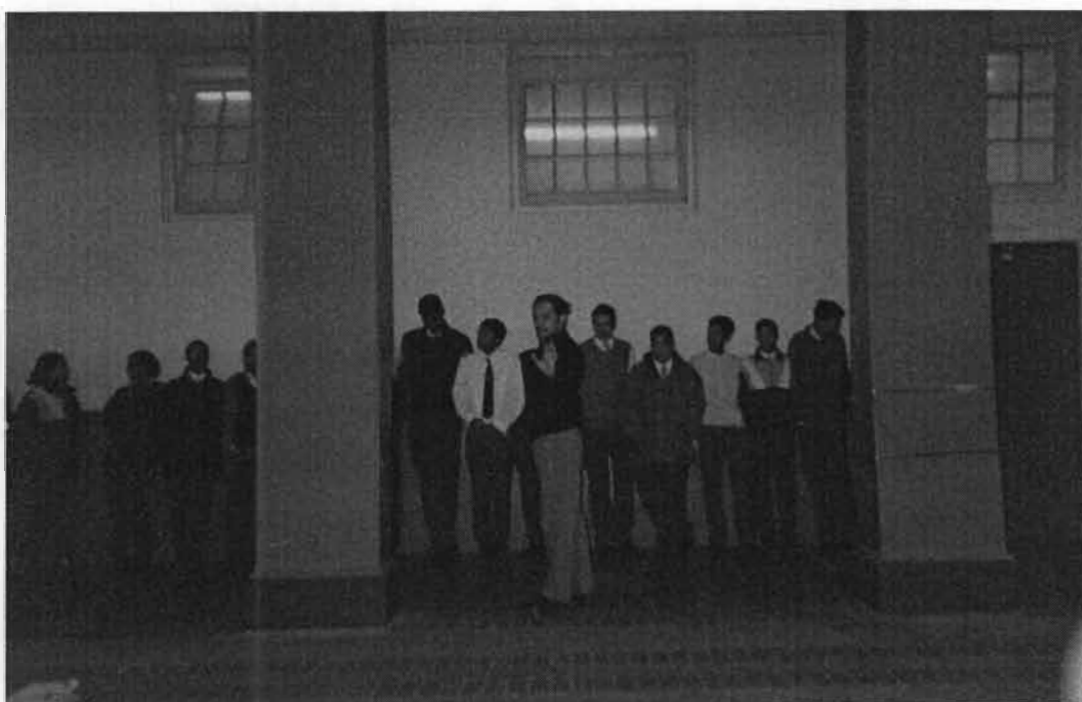


Figure 22. Discipline (4368).

The students have been sent out of their classroom, and are lined up to be reprimanded. The teacher is interrupted in his scolding by a number of student photographers who leap from behind pillars, cameras flashing. His authority is proven in this moment, since he is displayed as the teacher. However, as the act of discipline succeeds by individuating the students, and by making them visible not only to the teacher but to anyone passing by, it also fails. The teacher's being seen in the act of disciplining challenges his authority. As an institution that privileges control through surveillance (Foucault, 1977), power lies in seeing, and being seen is being disciplined. The teacher resists the recording of the scene: it is private. At the moment it is seen the shame of punishment transfers from the students to the teacher. The students laugh.



Figure 23. Death Row (4373).

The teacher's authority is undermined not only by the laughing students who resist the seriousness of his reprimand, but also by the student photographers who invade the sanctity of the disciplinary space. The caption of the photograph is a joke on the teacher – the lining up seems very far removed from serious punishment. What was to be a display of the teacher's disciplinary authority is a display of the failure of his authority, of his failure to maintain the privilege of his being seer not seen, of his disciplinary space.

The teacher's interaction with students is to some extent invisible in the school. The shaming/shameful nature of discipline is located, as with teachers' status, in its privileged privacy – what Denscombe (1992) refers to as 'the autonomy and isolation of the culture of the closed classroom'. Part of the privacy of classroom discipline is that classroom disruption is a reflection on the individual teacher rather than on the school community. The extent to which discipline is understood as the teacher's private, individual act is reflected in how a teacher's everyday professional ability is, according to Denscombe (1992), largely judged on his or her ability to control the learners.

It means that no matter how brilliant in their subjects, teachers who are unwilling or unable to establish control of the classroom are doomed to failure and will always be seen as poor teachers (52)²¹.

The teacher's control of students is indicated in two ways: noise and privacy. These two indicators are where a teacher's control is both established and undermined. A teacher's control is judged predominantly by the noise or lack of noise (in itself a function of how public or private what is occurring in the classroom is) in a classroom, but noise *is* allowable if the teacher concerned has a personal reputation for good control of learners. This control is signalled by maintaining *and* by disrupting the privacy of the closed classroom. Denscombe notes that a classroom's open door is often a social signal indicating teachers' confidence in their disciplinary practices, their classroom control.

Pictures of lining up, the subject of both the pictures above are frequently occasions for problematising discipline. For instance in 'Order' (4365), which depicts students lining up after break to go back into class – as prescribed in the school rules – students look glum and glowering. Despite the positive caption, the mood of the picture is sombre. 'Discipline, son' also depicts lining up but here a single line of students against a wall is broken up by a masked figure positioned diagonally. The masked student strikes the pose of a superhero. Here the mood is playful, but lining up continues to be a site of resistance. 'Friends' (4371) depicts a row of only three students. The two outer students hold masks up and the middle student displays her grinning face. I return to the expression of private meaning within the established discursive framework in the next section. The point I wish to make here is that in this photograph lining up is resisted in that the students are taking a photograph with private significance.

Separating the mass into 'individualities' (Foucault, 1977), by, for instance, lining them up, renders them potentially visible to the scrutiny of authority: the basis for discipline.

²¹ This is despite the fact that student teachers are seldom given any formal training in classroom control. Merrett and Wheldall's (1992) study of British secondary school teachers supports Denscombe's reading. Their analysis finds that discipline is an integral part of teaching and they recommend that teacher training take direct account of this. They quote one respondent who says

Discipline was an ugly word at college, although our everyday teaching is affected and possibly shaped by it. Not once in three years was it discussed. How should one react if a child refuses to do what he is told? What if a child swears at you? How do you establish silence? What forms of punishment should be used? (p.10).

The crowd, a compact mass, a locus of multiple exchanges, individualities merging together, a collective effort, is abolished and replaced by a collection of separated individualities. (Foucault, 1977, p.201)

The mob is antithetical to the process Foucault associates with modernity, where disciplinary technologies are used to individuate. Just as discipline contains the possibility of delinquency, as public display of control contains the possibility of the public display of the lack of control, and as the modern contains the possibility of the savage, lining up contains the possibility of the uncontrolled mob. In 'Order' (4365) the viewer relies for the distinction between 'crowd' and 'lined up students' on the caption. In 'Crowd' (4369, below) the distinction is clear.



Figure 24. Crowd (4369).

In this picture there is an uncanny surfacing of the trope of savagery that was so powerful in apartheid discursive practice. The students resemble a mass of protesters and the image itself resonates powerfully with the apartheid images of photographers like Magubane (see '1976 Soweto student uprising' below), and with the way student disruption is represented as mob justice in news accounts. Although this image is also commonly associated with liberation, it is, in this context as in those mentioned above, associated with delinquency.



Figure 25. 1976 Soweto student uprising. Magubane in Phelan, 1987.

'Crowd' alerts the viewer to what is being kept at bay in 'Order' and in other pictures where students are controlled and orderly. The uncontrolled crowd in 'Crowd' defies the school rules of movement and congregation. The image also defies the established discursive framework set up in the pictures, where the corridors are the setting for portraits or staged fights or staged sexual harassment.

The concepts the school is associated with in the photographs are part of the discourse of development that has been a feature of the all the texts examined in this dissertation. The association of the school space with principles of the modernity/savagery dichotomy reflects the dominant practices evidenced in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* and in the news articles. Although the school is a disciplinary space, it is also a shameful space. In being designated as the space for enacting modernity the school is also always designated as a savage space. This may be interpreted as what de Certeau (1984) terms 'the paradox of the frontier': that the frontier is the meeting place as well as the point of contact in territorial conflict. It is neither a modern nor a savage space, but always both. In this definition there is little room for true change since the definition of the frontier maps out a backwards-forwards movement that is really stasis²².

²² The policy document *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* is perhaps an example of movement forwards that is also a movement backwards.

However, some students' photographs interrupt the genres set up in the rest. There is also, in the playfulness exhibited in the photographs, a sense that students inhabit the school spaces by making them the setting for private narratives of personal conflicts, desires, identities and histories. There is a strong sense in the photographs of personal routes through the school spaces, of the private significance of certain places, and it is in this that the possibility of transgressing the modernity/ underdevelopment frontier arises in students' discursive practice. This may be accounted for in de Certeau's theory that, although transforming the 'void' of the frontier into an established place leaves it 'politically frozen', it is also potentially a bridge, or an occasion for transgression.

Transgressing the frontier

I have argued that the photographs reproduce the dominant macro-discursive practice where the school space is framed in terms of modernity and underdevelopment (or savagery). However, a large number of photographs disrupt the simplistic binary narratives discussed above. They do this either by presenting a narrative that is in opposition to the narratives discussed above, or by evading these narratives altogether. In this the photographs also chronicle important re-evaluations of the false binary opposition of delinquency and discipline. Some photographs represent not so much delinquency, where delinquency is understood as a deficiency defined within the dominant discourse and necessary to it, but transgression. Here transgression is understood as a movement towards a limit where neither the point of origin nor the point crossed has positive or negative value, but where the movement itself is generative.

For de Certeau (1984) the effect of modern social practices cannot be gauged in the macro-production of regulations, of capitalist relations, of the city space, but must also be judged in the local, everyday practices of consumption. To represent students simply as subjects of state and local institutions' disciplinary practices is to ignore the degree to which students themselves shape the everyday practice in their institutions, and make the regulations a part of their own expression, their own discursive practices.

Educational theorist Furlong (1985) uses the example of a working class underachieving adolescent boy in pointing out how being disruptive in class is polysemous.

The challenge to the teacher's authority may relate to his experience of educational failure and it may *also* involve a real questioning of the role of formal educational qualifications in the life he is likely to lead when he leaves school. In some circumstances it may give expression to his feelings of emotional tension generated through personal relationships outside the school and, depending on his *way* of challenging his teachers, it may also allow him to explore a particular form of masculine maturity. Other groups of pupils (for example working class girls, middle class boys) may share some of these meanings, but also have others of their own. (207)

Furlong describes misconduct as a language.

At first sight it may seem that the vocabulary of deviance is a limited one. Pupils can play truant, they can be disruptive in classrooms, they can be violent or they can opt out of lessons and become 'mental truants'. This limited vocabulary is widely understood among the pupil population. By the age of eight or nine most children know what it means to challenge the authority of teachers in these symbolic ways even if they have never used these forms of expression themselves. What is fascinating about children's behaviour at school is to watch how they are able to use this limited vocabulary to express many subtleties of meaning. School deviance as a symbolic language has a great potentiality to explore and express many nuances of the way children feel about their school, their teachers, their curriculum, their ambitions etc. (209)

This way of understanding school misconduct takes into account theories where misbehaviour is a sign of the individual school or student, *and* theories where misbehaviour is the transaction of a macro social order, such as the reproduction (or reflection) of class, gender and race systems. It also takes into account what has not been the focus of much research: the fun in misbehaving.

In the dry process of academic analysis we should not lose sight of the simple pleasure of irreverently poking fun at authority figures; the excitement and solidarity of shared illicit experiences and the positive pleasure of spending the day at home or on the streets rather than at school. (205)

Furlong's discussion of how a single act of misbehaving makes multiple meanings locates those meanings in terms of the individual motivation, institutional and social contexts. His brief discussion of the fun of misbehaving posits 'having fun' as yet another motivation – like personal relationships, formation of gender identity or reaction to class identity. There is also the suggestion that in academic meaning-making is ignored the possibility that there is sometimes no serious meaning to the misbehaviours of students: that they are just for fun.

All the photographs are characterised by a sense of play. In a significant proportion of the photos students are depicted engaged in playful behaviour²³. In addition, even the photographs that do not refer directly to playing (i.e. are not of a game) are playful in execution. This is obvious, for example, in ‘Laughter’ (4367, below) where the student actors miming a fight cannot keep a straight face. They do manage to maintain the proper decorum in ‘Right hook’ (4367) – the ‘serious’ version of ‘Laughter’. The series of photos is a concrete example of what is apparent in a great deal of the photographs: that the students are enjoying themselves. Despite the serious topics, students undertook the task in a playful spirit.

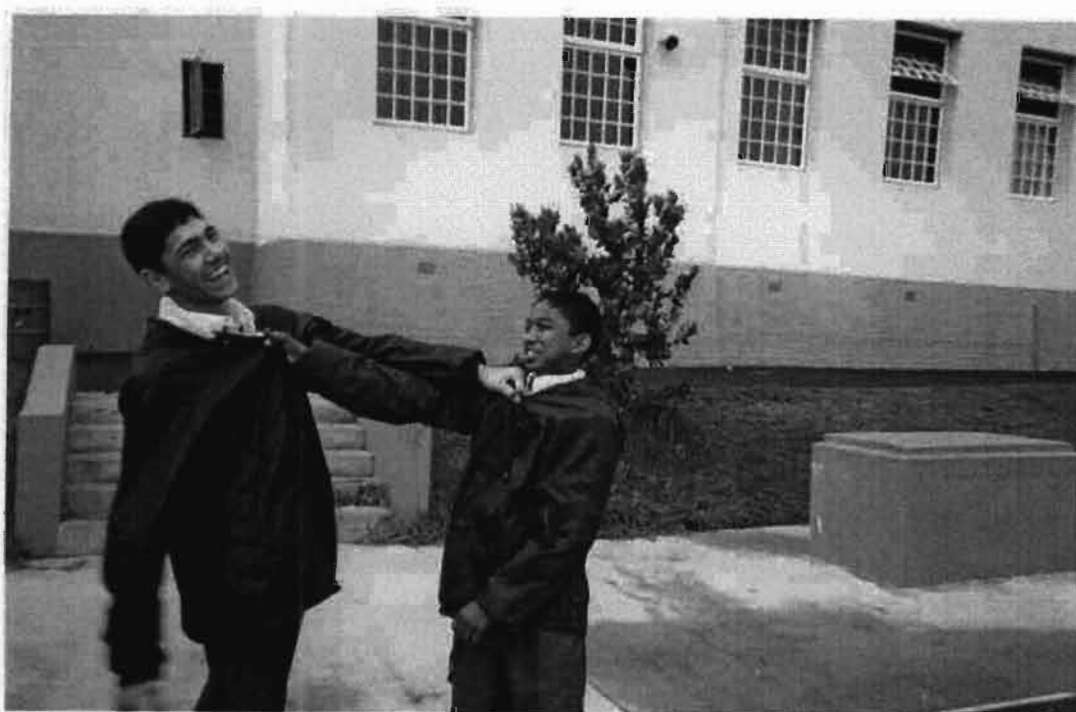


Figure 26. Laughter (4367).

In using the controlling space of the assignment to play students appropriate the assignment for their own use. De Certeau argues that the everyday (mis)use of modern systems of control constitutes an act of resistance and escape. The ways in which people inhabit the spaces that regulate them subverts the regulatory power. Some of this subversion is exactly in the meaningless acts that go against the grain of the regulatory activity – appearing to work when not working, dreaming on the subway, or, as is suggested in the photographs, having fun by misbehaving. Similarly, students use the controlling space of the school not only to play but also to tell their

²³ ‘Soft approach 1’ (4366), ‘Soft approach 2’ (4366), ‘Enjoyment’ (4370), ‘Sport’ (4370), ‘Supporters’ (4319), ‘School heart: interclass sport’ (4319), ‘Laughter’ (4367), ‘School mouth’ (4368), ‘Masks’ (4371).

own stories. I have argued that one of the important ways in which students display the school space as disciplinary is in that their narratives are ordered by the school space. The degree to which they have legitimate, and unregulated access to places is reflected in how many kinds of narratives they set in specific locations. Students evade this disciplinary control over the way they use space in using school places to tell their own stories.

According to de Certeau, making narratives of controlling spaces is in itself transgressive.

If the delinquent exists only by displacing itself, if its specific mark is to live not only on the margins but in the interstices of the codes that it undoes and displaces, if it characterised by the privilege of the *tour* over the *state*, then the story is delinquent. (130).

Articulating the local, 'spatialising' places according to private consumption, is delinquent in that it 'betrays' or disrupts 'the law of the place'. The transgression of the story bridges the frontier. The photographs interrupt the rules quoted earlier. They interject, making the places described in the rules – the toilets, the classrooms, the corridors – inhabited, occupied spaces.

Significant numbers of photographs have as their topics matters of personal interest to the photographers. Dominant among these are depictions of groups of friends. In 'Brotherhood' below falls under the workshop topic 'friendship'. However the topic is reworked to make it more expressive of the specific relationship between the students pictured. In this the photographer utilises the form of the task and the established discursive framework (in this case that pictures of friends are set in the corridors) to articulate a meaning that is an excess of those chains of signification.

Students tell their own stories in how their photographs have private meanings. While keeping to the task set of, for instance, depicting sexual harassment there may be significance is who is depicted with whom and where exactly the picture is located. I was alerted to this possibility of private meaning in how a certain picture gained



Figure 27. Brotherhood (4368).

currency because it pictured a male student kissing another student's girlfriend. The photograph is captioned 'sexual harassment' and is meaningful in that respect, but is more meaningful to the students in question because of its record of consensual intimate contact between the girl and her boyfriend's friend.

Students tell their own stories in the way they disrupt genres established in other pictures. For example, there is an established genre of depicting friends in the corridor alcoves²⁴ (e.g. 'Friendship' (4372); 'Laila' (4371); 'School heart' (4372)). Although there are two individual portraits, mostly the pictures are of single gender groups ranging in size from two to seven. The genre of depicting friends grouped in a certain alcove in the corridor is disrupted in 'Alone' (4372).

²⁴ School models 4371; Aneeqah 4371; Love 4368; Friendship Honesty 4371; Zuleiga 4371; Laila 4371; Friendship 4372, 'Khatija Fortune' (4372), 'Loving' (4372), 'School eyes' (4372), 'School spirit' (4372), 'Unity' (4372), 'Friendship' 2 (4372), 'School heart' (4372), 'School eyes' (4371) and also the untitled pictures 29A 4374; 30A 4374; 28A 4374

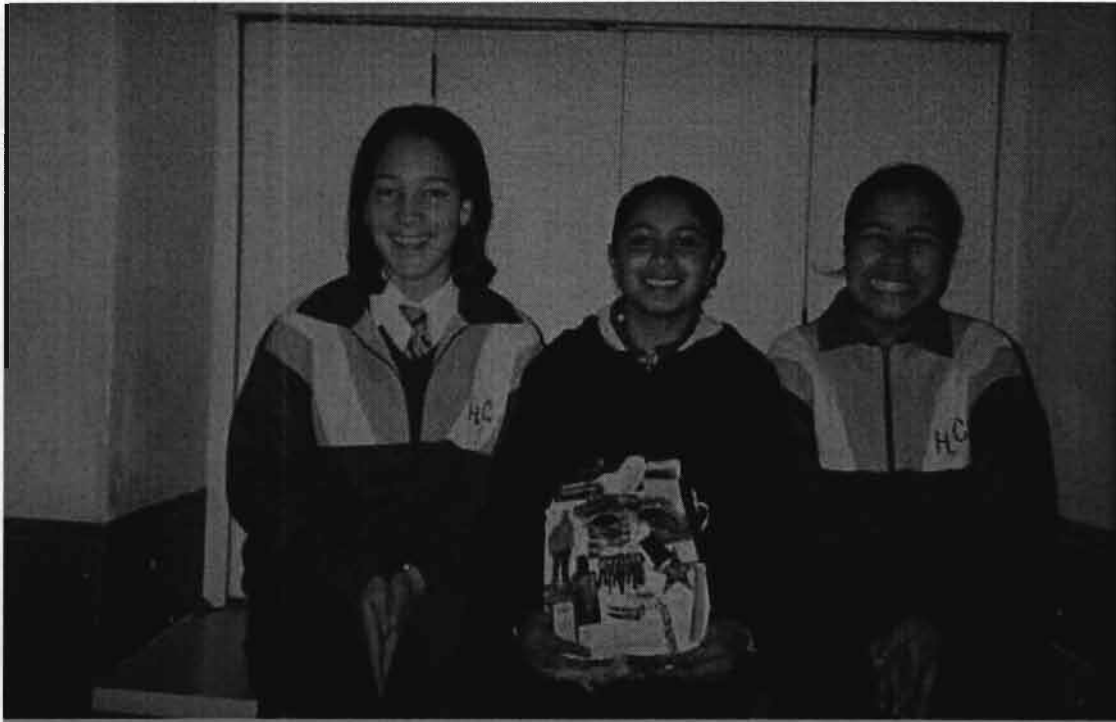


Figure 28. Friendship (4374)



Figure 29. Alone (4372).

Here the solitary mask, representing the student taking the photograph, and the surprising absence of friends, means the caption is hardly necessary. In an example that is more directly related to subject of this study, students disrupt the established

genre of trespass or of the inappropriate use of space to depict something beyond the false binary opposition of discipline and delinquency.

I have argued that students disrupt the binary opposition of discipline and delinquency in the playful nature of their photographs, and in how they appropriate the controlling spaces of the school for their own narratives. All these kinds of photographs propose a school space that is neither disciplinary nor underdeveloped but transgressive. The photographs of this nature that are set in the classroom are particularly interesting and promising. The classroom predominantly features in the photographs as disciplinary space where both disciplined and delinquent behaviour is defined. However, in, for instance, 'Athletics' (4372) and 'Thoughts' (4372) it is not just a space "where there is no longer any alternative to disciplinary falling-into-line or illegal drifting away, that is form or another of prison and wandering outside the pale" (de Certeau, 1984). Instead the classroom is pictured here as a generative, transgressive space.

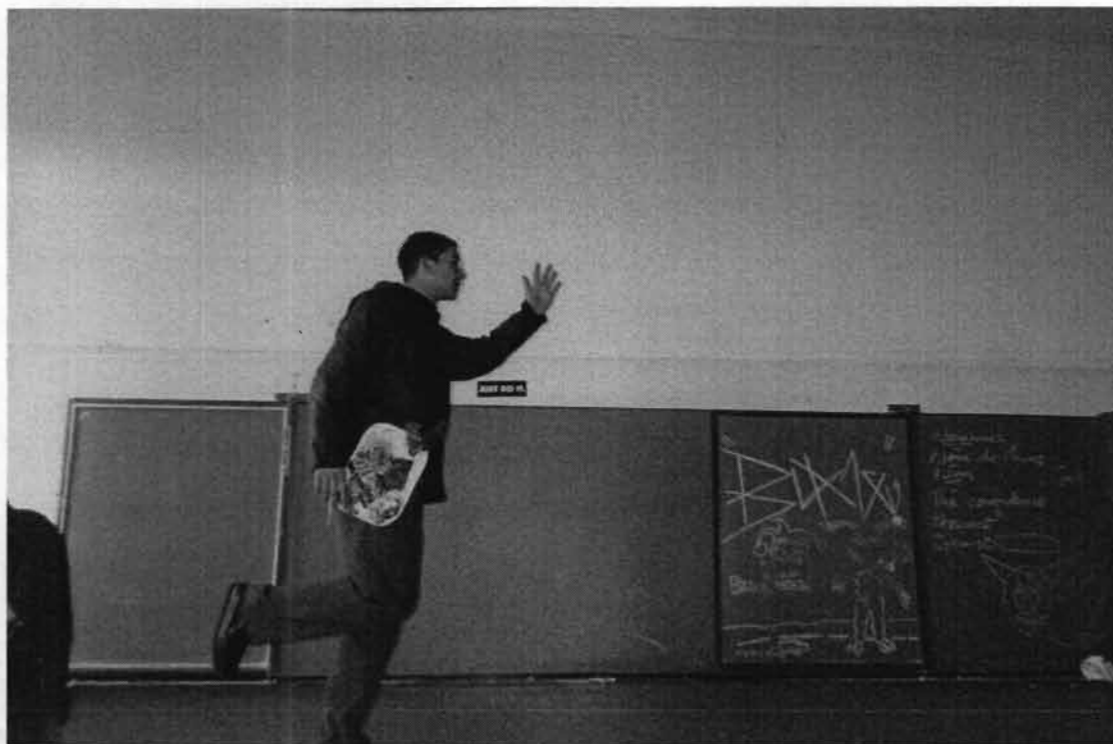


Figure 30. Athletics (4372).

In 'Athletics' (4372, above), the genre of trespass that signals delinquency is disrupted. The caption indicates that the inappropriate use of the desk is no longer negative as it is in 'Standing on the table' (4965) and in 'Misbehaviour' (4360) discussed earlier. Similarly, in 'Thoughts' (4372, below) the activity pictured is neither delinquent nor disciplined, according the definitions set up in other classroom

pictures. The student is neither obviously engaged in work, nor obviously not engaged in work.



Figure 31. Thoughts (4372).

These pictures represent a greater transgression than the ‘naughty’ pictures of students urinating, smoking or miming sexual harassment, because these pictures transgress the frontier between the disciplinary and delinquent spaces in the school.

As a transgression of the limit, a disobedience of the law of the place, it represents a departure, an attack on a state, the ambition of a conquering power, or the flight of an exile; in any case the “betrayal” of an order. (De Certeau, 1984, 128)

In transgressing the false binary opposition of discipline and delinquency, these representations betray the order of the false binary opposition of modernity and savagery.

Students inhabit the school’s regulations as they inhabit the school spaces. Although students submit to a greater and lesser extent to the official designations of school spaces, they also use the spaces in the construction of personal narratives of identity and history. In doing so they re-order school spaces. Similarly students occupy the school’s disciplinary discursive practices, making it a mode of expression that exceeds the definition of discipline and delinquency. In this students evade the dichotomy of the modern and underdevelopment, and suggest that the space in between is not the failure of both modernity and tradition (as Mudimbe (1988) notes it

is often described as). If the space between is often understood as both the failure of the past and the future, the photographs examined in this section are a positive articulation of the present.

For de Certeau (1984) the frontier is a paradox as it is both a border between and a meeting place. If the school is commonly regarded as the frontier, it is also potentially a space for transgression that is generative of a more original discursive practice. For hooks (1994) the classroom is necessarily a space for transgression, where transgression disrupts an oppressive order in 'movement against and beyond boundaries' (1994, p.12). Here she draws on Freire's (1972, 1973) idea of 'limit-acts' where students become aware of the contours of hegemony by challenging its precepts. I am suggesting here that where schools are transgressive spaces, the hegemonic values of the apartheid state are more effectively challenged than in setting up new hegemonic frameworks such as those proposed in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*.

In presenting the school as a transgressive space, the photographs interrupt the policy document and the news articles. Where *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* describes a limited number of school personalities, the photographs describe not only a multitude of subject positions, but describe how a single person may occupy many of these in the course of a few hours. Where the news articles present a monolithic account of school disruption where meaning is established and assured, the photographs insist on private meanings to public acts, and do not present one account of even the most simple event. In the photographs there is a sense of the multitude of histories that make up a school moment.

If the school is one of the contemporary frontiers between the idea of modernity and the idea of tradition, an intermediate and marginal space (Mudimbe, 1988), then the photographs articulate that space not as a failed space, a void, but as a generative one. Despite the reiteration of the savage and the modern in the photographs, and despite the continued reliance on binary oppositions for understanding discipline and delinquency, the student narratives exceed the boundaries of the discursive practice within which they operate. In this the photographs are more generative of a discursive

practice that exceeds or transgresses the savage than the policy document and the news articles.

Implicit in the policy and news accounts of student disruption analysed in chapters three and four is the idea that disruption was necessary once and is no longer appropriate. Although framed in terms of savagery and modernity, both sets of accounts are constrained in their understanding of student and teacher behaviour by the possibility that student protest is necessarily alerting the public to injustice – as the student protests in the 70s and 80s did. This possibility is to some extent created exactly in the continued framing of delinquency and discipline in terms of savage crowds and depraved authorities. The use of established tropes of savagery suggests a meta-narrative of the failure or success of development or civilising processes. In the representation of instances of school disruption, local significance is regularly ignored in favour of a second order (Barthes, 1993) national significance. It is clear, however, that in the photographs as well as students representing abstract idea of discipline, order and delinquency, they also represent themselves. The mythic significance of the abstract signification is always disrupted by the potential for local significance. This is the possibility of not understanding the pictures. The pictures are polysemous, and some of their meanings are inaccessible except to insiders. This is fundamentally disruptive of a binary model of discursive practice, and it is disruptive of a meta-narrative of modernity or savagery. My analysis suggests that the disruption of the frontier between modernity and savagery is crucial to post-apartheid transformation. It is exactly in a continued conformity to the binary terms dictated under colonial and apartheid rule that the failure of democracy would lie.

6. THE SPACE BETWEEN

I have demonstrated in my analysis of education policy, news reports and students' own photographs how contemporary South African representations of student delinquency are most commonly framed in terms of a binary opposition of modernity and savagery. This has three major implications. The first is that these different sets of discursive practices appear to be highly interdependent in terms of how delinquency and discipline are framed. The second implication is that what is 'known' about school discipline and delinquency is a function of a pervasive narrative of the frontier, rather than, more properly, being a critical engagement with an intersection between local and national concerns. In other words, instead of school discipline being understood as a function of national objectives (like, e.g., enabling Rebehn's (1994) 'religion of democracy') and local objectives (like, e.g., classrooms being quiet enough for the teacher to be heard), noisy classrooms (for instance) become signs of inherent savagery. Since the school is properly regarded as a space for savagery ultimately to be converted (or reformed) into 'civilised' behaviour, the disruption that is the noisy class is a reassuring signal that all is as it should be: civilising is manifestly called for, and, in dealing with the noisy class, civilising is taking place. In this process of signification the project of, for instance, enabling a culture of civil democracy is disregarded since it is either assumed to be part of 'civilising' (which is spurious since 'civilising' is more thoroughly associated in South Africa with affirming racial boundaries) or it is marginalised as a concern since the more pressing concern is making the classroom quiet enough for the teacher to be heard. In addition to obscuring the degree to which civil democracy is being enabled in schools (for teachers as well as students), the numerous reiterations of a singular narrative of savagery and civilised modernity obscure the fact that not many stories are being told. The third implication of the pervasive nature of the frontier narrative is that it re-enacts a racial discipline in South African civil society.

Although in the representations in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, the news reports and the student photographs savagery sometimes stands for a racist view of pre-colonial African traditions, and sometimes for post-colonial 'underdevelopment', savagery typically stands for the disorder of the racialised 'other'. In that school

spaces are represented in terms of savagery, the figure of the savage, which is also a trace of colonial and apartheid racist order, haunts representations of contemporary



Figure 32. 'Five years with the Congo cannibals' (Ward, 1890) in Brantlinger (1985, 199).

South African schooling. The dark figure (e.g. above) dancing around a fire against the backdrop of Nature that was a feature of European explorers' accounts of Darkest Africa is reiterated in the depictions of mob justice and civil protest of the apartheid era. However, in even its reincarnation in the threatening crowd, the figure of the savage always also refers to the scene pictured above (figure 29) and others like them where Africans display their lack of civilisation for the colonial gaze. I have argued here that the resemblance between colonial representations of savagery and contemporary student delinquency is effected through the link of vigilante action. In apartheid discursive practice student resistance and vigilante action are linked with colonial tropes of the savage. This relationship may be represented in the uncanny resemblance between the Ward sketch of savagery (above) and the Magubane photograph of vigilante action (below).



Figure 33. Magubane, 1993.

The idea of students as savage implies that school disorder is a function of race, rather than social order. This uncanny surfacing of the dark figure depicted by Ward (figure 29) in contemporary representations of student delinquency may be illustrated in the following still from the television series *Yizo Yizo 1* (Markgraaf, 2001). In this scene student delinquency is by implication a product of a savage disregard, which is also, by implication, a black disregard, for modern order. The delinquent students in *Yizo Yizo 1* are delinquent not only because they use drugs, vandalise school property or rape. They stand for a complete and terrifying dissolution of order. The dissolution of order is represented in their savage dance around a fire fed by the symbols of modern schooling: desks and classroom doors.



Figure 34. Desks burning. Yizo Yizo (Markgraaf, 2001).

The revisionist text of *Yizo Yizo* is fundamentally disrupted by a reinvestment in a racist trope. Similarly, I have demonstrated in my analysis that the revisionist text of the education policy document *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* is disrupted by its continued reliance on a narrative in which teachers are savage.

The presence of tropes of savagery in contemporary accounts of school discipline suggests that the anxiety expressed about school disruption, about the potential for savagery in students and in teachers, is an anxiety about modernity and an anxiety about race. I have demonstrated that schools are commonly envisaged either as the frontier spaces of colonial expansion, the frontiers of racial definition or as the new frontier of democratic development. I have argued that therefore the schools are both saturated with the residue of repressive order and potentially a generative spaces of new discursive practice.

The presence of the savage in the revisionist text of *Yizo Yizo* is perhaps not surprising given that the project of discipline in Southern African schools has always been the spectacle of modernising the savages, a secular conversion to civilisation.



Figure 35. 'Gobabis Roman Catholic Mission School, nuns with girls doing washing' Hahn, 1930
(Hartmann, Silvester and Hayes, 2001, p.57).

In the redefinition of African society as savage, signalled discursively in 'paganism, nakedness and cannibalism' – what Mudimbe (1988) terms the 'syndrome of savagery' – being African is delinquent, and punishable. The project of converting

pagans to Christians is the same ideological project as the conversion of naked 'child-like' natives to civilised adults through education, which is also the same project as the evolution of cannibal 'beasts' to human beings (Mudimbe, 1988). The project of modern discipline is the spectacle of racial difference, of black delinquency, and so the project of schooling in Southern Africa has historically been one of schooling 'natives' in 'hygiene', manual labour and 'tradition': in docility and 'otherness' (as in the picture above where young women in what is now Namibia learn how to wash clothes). It is also the project of teaching supremacist values to white children, as exemplified in apartheid's Christian National Education where white children were exposed to explicitly racist ideology as well as to a culture of fear. These values may be illustrated in the following picture of white schoolgirls being taught to supervise black women.



Figure 36. 'Herero women washing clothes' undated. (Hartmann, Silvester & Hayes, 2001, p.57)

The disciplinary technologies of desks, uniforms, the idea of 'strictness' are enlisted in the project of defining racial categories, and make the school into a colonial frontier.

In that the school is a frontier there is a direct link between the spectacle of modern schooling and the spectacle of corporal punishment: these spectacles are linked in terms of the production of race. The following illustration depicting a mock flogging

that was circulated as a postcard during the German colonial rule of the Southern African country Namibia is a good example of the spectacle of discipline. It is also a good example of the multivalency of the savage, its ability to time-travel intact.



Figure 37. 'Punishment of a Native/ Black trespasser beaten by fellow-blacks', Hartmann, Silvester and Hayes (1998, p.42).

The photograph was originally captioned "*Züchtigung eines Eingeborenen*" ('Punishment of a Native') and was re-captioned in the 1970s, when South Africa ruled Namibia, to depict "Black trespasser beaten by fellow-blacks" (Hartmann, Silvester & Hayes, 2001, p.42). In its first guise it was intended to reassure colonial audiences of the strict administration of law and order in the German colony (Hartmann, Silvester & Hayes, 2001, p.42). This law and order was not by any means as certain as the depictions of it suggest. Hayes (2001) explains that photography was often used in colonial Namibia to invoke a degree of control that was belied by the actual weak colonial presence. The colonial presence that was eventually consolidated not through the rigid administrative control suggested in the photographs from the period, but after serious droughts, famine and depression (p.171).

The very weaknesses of the colonial state [in Namibia] and official presence, it could be argued, necessitated such a degree of visualisation of power. (Hayes, 2001, p.171)

The act of discipline that is in its first guise a reassurance of colonial power is in its second guise a reassurance that brutal punishment is a result of 'black on black'

violence rather than of state policy¹. In that in the second version the punishment depicted in the postcard is associated with savagery the spectacle of punishment depicted is associated with mob rule rather than the ‘real’ order of the state. In complete keeping with the apartheid state’s project of fostering ‘separate development’ on the grounds that black people were archaic, ‘Black trespasser beaten by fellow-blacks’ reinforces the location of delinquency in blackness. It overtly shifts the problematic corporal punishment – not quite in keeping with the modernist project – to the arena of savagery. Both versions of the postcard are, like the signifiers of modernity in schools, demonstrations both of state control and of the need for state control. Both versions, like the signifiers of modernity in schools, suggest, in their order, the possibility of savagery. Similarly, the school features in contemporary South African accounts both as a sign of modernity *and* as a sign of the need for modernity. Schools are both the scenes of demonstrations of state control and of demonstrations of the need for state control. In *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, for instance, the school is both the site of teachers’ savagery (their use of corporal punishment) and the site of their dramatic conversion to modernity. In contemporary news reports this is evidenced in how the state reasserts control over unruly (savage) teachers and students. In terms of narrative structure, stories of school disruption are the occasions for stories of how sometimes the police but more commonly education department officials themselves reinstate law and order in the face of student riots or teachers’ misconduct. In the student photographs their school features in more complex ways as a backdrop for personal narratives, but there is nevertheless a dominant pattern of describing the school in terms of its failure and success in being modern.

Schools are represented in contemporary South African discursive practice as settings for scenes of punishment. As in the postcard discussed above the shame of punishment may shift from punished to punisher. This may explain the way in which teachers are represented as savage in news reports and in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, as well as the way in which teachers’ authority is both confirmed and shameful in the student photographs. What is constant is the spectacle of punishment, and its nature as ‘evidence’ both of savagery and of the need for modernity. The sheer

¹ See Fair and Astroff (1991) for a discussion of how the representation of political faction fighting as

volume of contemporary accounts of school punishment suggests a fascination with scenes of punishment that perhaps reveals an underlying anxiety. The fascination, and anxiety, refers to the binary opposition of savagery and modernity, not only in that simultaneous fascination and revulsion characterise the ‘othering’ gaze, but in the historical association of Southern African scenes of punishment with the project of modernity. However, the Southern African project of modernity is also the project of producing race. The fact that modern schooling and the project of school discipline are manifestly ways of producing race suggests that the contemporary anxiety about school disruption is also an anxiety about race. The discipline of race (also) means keeping racial groups separate; it means keeping to your race (see e.g. Chisholm, 1989). In the regular exhortations to stricter discipline, in the dominance of disciplining as a media metaphor for relations between DOE officials and teachers², school authorities are being enjoined to a strictness that, as well as being modern, is also racial.

Congratulations to Minister of Education Kader Asmal... His surprise visit to a school where no teaching or learning was going on, and his insistence that the situation be rectified, is precisely the sort of action necessary to kick-start many of our country’s educators who do not do their jobs!

These parasites give the entire teaching profession an undeserved bad reputation and they must be rooted out! (Letters to the Editor, *Mail&Guardian* 21 January 2000)

The tactic of disciplining teachers and school administrators is lauded as evidence of the state’s efficiency.

Yes, do bring back the rod, not to cane the students, but to cane undisciplined teachers, principals, education MECs, and the civil servants responsible for not providing textbooks on time. (Letters to the Editor, *Mail&Guardian* 21 January 2000)

The strict discipline teachers and the state are urged towards in the press is the discipline of controlling the savage, of keeping the savage out: the discipline of racial boundaries. In the contemporary shift away from speaking directly about race the savage has become associated more generally with the past. What are the ‘undisciplined teachers, principals, education MECs and civil servants’ if not savage? Inefficient, unproductive, they are not modern. In these representations the school

tribal deflects responsibility for violence from the state onto ‘savages’.

² As in ‘MEC lashes out at ‘disgraceful teachers’ *Sowetan* 28 August 2000, ‘Asmal wags his finger at educators’ *Business Day* 21 February 2000, ‘Asmal lays down the law for school strikes’ *Business Day* 31 March 2000, ‘Asmal warns errant teachers of tough bill’ *Business Day* 15 May 2000, ‘Teachers’ unions say they do not like Asmal’s lessons’ *Business Day* 18 May 2000, ‘Let devotion not greed drive teachers’ *Business Day* 26 October 2001, ‘Principals face tough inspection’ *Business Day* 21 January

continues to be a space for struggling against savagery, and the state's authority is asserted in its role as civilisor. In this article set well into the periphery that is the Limpopo Province, the minister of education arrives from the centre like a missionary bearing the Word: Discipline. He castigates a school principal for the barbaric conditions in his school.

"Can someone tell me," Education Minister Kader Asmal asks teachers, pupils and community members at the George Maragula School in Northern Province, "what you are doing to prevent children from studying in such a furnace?"

"I don't want to hear about your problems. Tell me what you are doing to put it right. Can you tell me why the matric results are only (a) 22% (pass)?"

Stony silence follows until school principal Patrick Dolo nervously tries to offer an explanation. "One of the reasons for this situation," he says, "is that I have no appropriately qualified teachers to teach certain subjects."

Responding to the demand for an explanation for the sight of pupils crammed in a hot, dark, stuffy tin shack with only one window and a door serving as ventilators, Dolo says: "Well, minister when it is hot they go under the trees, but because there were cars parked there, we could not send them outside."...

"But it is illegal for people to work when temperatures reach a certain level," Asmal retorts, demanding a better explanation.

"The principal should be honest," interjects Northern Province head of department Harry Nengwekhulu. "You are not managing the school properly," he says to the shocked principal.

Asmal, now the referee, calls them to order as the slanging match threatens to get out of hand. But not before a shattered Dolo squeezes out a hollow protest. "You are allowing him to crucify me unfairly," he says to the minister. ('Principals face tough inspection' *Business Day* 21 January 2002, paras 2-5, 7-9)

The principal is the scapegoat for a lack of development, the savagery, that is signalled in the poor buildings, in the children sitting in the hot buildings, in the possibility of the children sitting under the tree, in the heat itself. In the vague shame of discipline evidenced in the student photographs and in the policy document, in the castigation of the principal for his attempts at order, and especially in the sensational reporting of the castigation there is a voyeuristic pleasure at the savagery of it all that recalls the colonial fervour evidenced in the 'Punishment of a native...' postcard above. The spectacle of discipline – of the teacher lining up his students, of the children sitting in the overheated room, of the minister reprimanding the principal – is represented for the voyeuristic gaze of the modern who looks at the savage. This

2002, 'Mbeki slams behaviour of teachers' *Mail&Guardian* 7 September 1998 'Ex-teacher Asmal hauls out the ruler' *Mail&Guardian* 16 July 1999.

voyeuristic, 'othering' gaze on teachers and students is highly apparent in the news reports on school disruption, where teachers and students' savageries are displayed, often in sensational ways, for the reader. This gaze is to some extent replicated in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* where the reader is encouraged to look on teachers' disciplinary practices as proof of their savagery or their modernity. This gaze is not so apparent in the students' photographs, where few scenes of punishment are displayed: although, where punishment is depicted, both punished and punisher may be depicted as shameful.

The escape from the past that is sought in new legislation, in new discursive practices, is defeated in the continued representation, in the continued presence, of the savage. The escape is defeated in that the figure of the savage is a trace of raced delinquency, and a trace of colonial and apartheid ways of seeing. In addition, the continued reliance on the idea of savagery implies that school disruption and school reform is understood in dichotomies of modernity and tradition, then and now, old and new. Modernity is reinscribed to refer to post-apartheid, and the savagery it is set against is apartheid practice. However, there is a third element in the equation: 'tradition'. Neither modernity, savagery nor tradition are closely defined in the news reports or policy document analysed here. It is assumed as 'consensus knowledge' (Hall, 1973) that the reader understands the value of these terms and their relation to each other: that the reader is familiar with the narrative structure. In addition, the meanings of these terms shift, and there is considerable slippage between what is signified by, for instance, 'apartheid practice' and 'tradition'. While in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* apartheid practice is a sign for savagery (as it is in the news article 'Dog named Kader Asmal'), in the news article 'Angry youth poisoned parents' it is tradition that is a sign for savagery. In this article the parents' traditionalism is established through their use of a sangoma, and establishes the father's regular beatings of his son as part of 'African disciplinarian tradition'. In general practice, then, both tradition and apartheid practice may be signs of the savage. It is much easier to swallow the idea of apartheid as savage than that African tradition is savage, although the latter has a far longer history than the former. What is important is not, however, how savagery is defined but what it is defined against: modernity. It is especially evident in the news reports and in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* that modernity is presented in an unproblematically positive light. Student delinquency

cannot be understood in reductive terms as the irruption of savagery, as the irruption of the past, or as the dissonance of the modern; the dissonance of the future. It is a fallacy that some South Africans are living in the past.

The school is one of the contemporary South African frontiers between 'the illusion of development' (Mudimbe, 1988) (or modernity) and tradition (or savagery) - 'a poor image of a mythical past'.

This space reveals not so much that new imperatives could achieve a jump into modernity, as the fact that despair gives this intermediate space its precarious pertinence and, simultaneously, its dangerous importance. (p.5)

As located in the void between tradition and modernity, the anxiety of the school is the anxiety of African underdevelopment. Both the despair of underdevelopment and its dangerous importance are implicit in the contemporary South African anxiety about school discipline. The school is at the frontier between 'modernity' (development) and 'tradition' (savagery), and so also at the temporal frontier between then and now, old and new. It is in the space between an idea of the past and an idea of the future. This means that teachers and students are touched with the dis-ease of being in-between, of those who occupy the void. Teachers are associated both with the shame of corporal punishment that is also the shame of the past and with the reverence due to quasi-religious figures who herald in the future. Students are in the position of the savage to the teacher's civilising knowledge. However they are also in the position of the modern to the teacher's (shameful) control that is also a sign of the savage past.

There is an indication in the *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* of a new(er) way of seeing. The document makes a break from raced delinquency and raced punishment. The policy is an uneasy mix of the expected political marketing but also of liberation rhetoric and, most surprisingly, of psychological self-help. Although ultimately teachers are scapegoated, the rupture of the form opens up a space for speaking to the local, for speaking outside of binary opposites. The major flaw in the document is *indicated* by interpellating teachers as savage, but is really the failure to articulate its relation to the past adequately. In the easy equation of the past with the savage, the document slips into missionary discourse where there is no dialogue possible with savages (Mudimbe, 1988). Sayed (2000) criticises the DOE's policy that allows

school governing bodies (in which teachers, students and parents have representation) to write important school policy as a way of maintaining racial and class inequities. While this may be true, it is also exactly in such processes that dialogue between the national and the local is possible.

If the student photographs, their narratives, are delinquent bridges, as suggested by de Certeau's (1984) theory, then the void is a point of contact, a generative space rather than a nowhere place. However, the students articulate their narratives with the structure presented to them. The narratives bridge the gap between but are articulated into that space; are, to some extent, formed by the space left to them. Certainly it does not serve the development of a narrative of democracy to present a space in which the possibilities to be exceeded are so limited to begin with.

Finally, I would like to pursue briefly the implication in my discussion that content is contingent on form. To some extent the problem of the savage haunting is the insistence on frontiers, the insistence on the proper form or an insistence on genre. Fuller ascribes the failure of school reform as a developing state's insistence that development *is* lists and clean buildings, rather than that development is *signalled* by these forms. The problem of the relationship between form and content is made more profound by the possibility that certain genres of discursive practice allow more space for generative transgression practice. The genre of news reporting is dictated to a great extent by the perceived market demand for the newsworthy and by the formulaic constraints and conventions of journalism (eg: objectivity, balance, an appeal to particular kinds of 'authority' for validation – see McNair, 1998), and despite the recent tendency to localise news media, the definition of what is locally newsworthy is still in reference to a national or global framework. If generative delinquency may be described as the articulation of the everyday, the spatialising of place, then the restrictions inherent to news media limit the extent of delinquency possible, relative to the delinquency possible in other genres. The limits ascribed to policy, the limits that can be exceeded, are also dictated in a macro, national realm. Perhaps the true benchmark of transformative potential for both these forms is the extent to which specific news reports or specific policies open a space for local dialogue (as is sometimes the case with talk radio). Taking on board Sayed's criticism, the question regarding policy may be how to ensure that a national discourse of, for example,

egalitarianism, or, more pertinently, children's rights, is represented in local discourse. In the case of education policy this may mean simply a shift in how the policy is presented. Policy documents should allow for the complex relationship teachers themselves are likely to have had (and may continue to have) with local and national authorities. Clearly teachers themselves continue to be the subjects of authoritarian discourse, and this is not addressed in the policy. Further, in framing the history of such a policy as *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment* the problematic historical relationship between students and education (as well as government) authorities should be acknowledged. However, I would argue that policy alone will never be entirely adequate to the task of shifting institutional discursive practice. There is clearly a need for government policy units to establish links with public administration research, in determining how to effect the far-reaching changes envisioned. In future research I would like to explore ways in which a school community might explicitly articulate the ways in which race and apartheid are written into the social fabric of the school, and represented in its disciplinary spaces. If articulated with other school community members, creative, reflective projects such as the photography project I completed could prove to be good ways to begin a process of envisioning a school order that encourages students to critical awareness (Greene, 1978, 1988), and relieves teachers of some of the necessity to 'police the frontier'.

It should be recognised that policy discourse is part of a broader social framework of discursive practices. The one-sided news narratives are clearly problematic in that they strengthen a 'consensus knowledge' that both teachers and students are savage. What is manifestly clear from this study is that it is the singular nature of the narrative of school discipline and delinquency that is problematic. The ways in which the students' own photographs evade a reductive narrative can be attributed to how many different representations were allowed for in this project. Similarly, in *Yizo Yizo* the possibilities inherent in the genre for many different points of view on the school space allow for a more rounded, and ultimately, although fictional, a more truthful account of school relations. Nevertheless, there is also a need for longitudinal, national, empirical qualitative research to establish with greater precision than is now possible a general picture of what disciplinary practices in schools are.

In order to change an institution needs to recreate itself through recreating its relationship with the past (Gill, 2001). In other words, for example, if a school community has no coherent narrative through which to connect individual memories of a trauma such as apartheid with each other, it has no way to separate those memories from the present. Deal (1990) notes the need to make a narrative of change as “a process [that] keeps the past and the present connected” (p.142). Specifically, he advocates writing into the school’s everyday time heroes and heroines that articulate the present with the past, and rituals that articulate consistent values into the future. The student photographs refer to a binary system in which their position is troubling, but they also mock it and undermine it in their transgression, sometimes, of the proper form, of the proper place, their transgression, sometimes, of the frontier. In the photographs a discursive framework is established in which a student entering a teacher’s space is trespassing, or even invading.

The scene of a student standing close to a teacher’s desk is usually confrontational or at least challenging to the teacher’s authority. In this authority is defined as regulatory and prescriptive, and the position of the student is either as delinquent or as submitting to discipline. In ‘Look up’ (4371, below), however, the student enters the

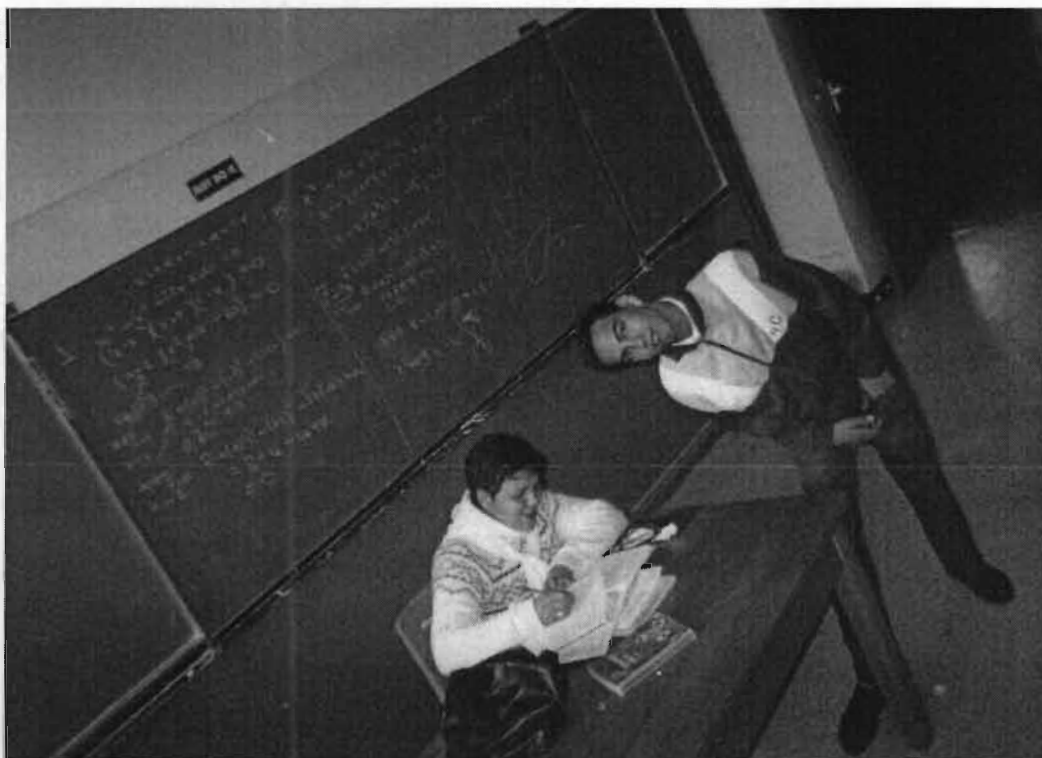


Figure 38. Look up (4371).

teacher's space in a non-confrontational manner. The teacher is smiling, and the student looks inquiring. The caption is not negative. Here there is the suggestion that the classroom is more than a space for regulation and delinquency; that it is also a space for inquiry, and perhaps for the evasion of false binary oppositions such as teacher/student. In doing so they suggest that their school allows them a space for critical expression, and they present an encouraging vision of creative, generative transgression, of the fun of transforming in-between into somewhere.

To return to the questions posed in the first chapter, I have demonstrated here that discipline and delinquency are represented in terms of savagery and modernity. If discipline is emptied in the Barthian sense of its first order meaning, it has come to stand, instead, for the possibility of modernity – and so, by implication, in an uncanny way for the possibility of savagery. A considerable number of the student photographs demonstrate a sense of an order that transgresses the frontier maintained with such persistence in other instances of discursive practices. I have found that, while the policy document and the news reports indicate ruptures in the simple dichotomy of savagery and modernity, this tends rather to be a redefinition of savagery and modernity than to transgress the reductive binary. The failure of discipline – the presence of delinquency – is reassuring of a frontier between savagery and modernity. If, as in many of the news reports, the frontier is also a sign of racial separation then the failure of discipline is reassuring of that border's continued validity: that race continues to be a (perhaps even the most) meaningful way of ordering South African society. If, as in *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment*, the frontier is also a sign of the distinction between then and now, then the failure of discipline is reassuring of the difference between then and now. The irruption of the savage past into the present proves the impossibility of now being just like then.

The question I am left with is whether it is possible to exorcise the figure of the savage from a new(er) South African modernity. Drawing on Mudimbe (1988) and Escobar (1995), a project with a better chance of success seems to be claiming the intermediate space between tradition and modernity not as a marginal space of underdevelopment but as a positive nonmodern space for self-definition.

7. REFERENCES

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